



# Rotation Model Sunday School Lesson Plans

## “Paul and the Bright Light”

**Memory Verse:** "So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!" 2 Corinthians 5:17 (NRSV)

### **Learning Center Overview:**

**Holy Word Cinema:** This video workshop includes a discussion of the Nest video, “Saul of Tarsus”, and an awesome "popcorn" reflection of the transformative power of faith in Jesus

**Eat Your Way Through the Bible:** Your chefs will create and eat a "story map" using crescent roll dough, and bake themselves (represented in the dough) using a Bright Light.

**Computer Lab:** Students see and interact with Acts 9 using the Life of Paul software, and take a deeper look at Saul's name change, as a guide to thinking about how they too are different because of their faith.

**Music Workshop:** Your "student musicians" will jam in Acts 9 and create their own version of the "Amazing Grace" that Jesus extended to Paul (who once was blind but now he sees!) While it wouldn't hurt, this fun music workshop requires very little musical talent to teach!

## (WT) Paul and the Bright Light - Lesson Objectives and Bible Background



The Writing Team   Fortifying our Supporting Members

Rotation.org Writing Team

### Paul and the Bright Light Lesson Objectives and Bible Background

#### Scripture for the lessons

Acts 9:1-22, the story of Saul's encounter with Christ on the Road to Damascus.

Additional Scripture for teacher preparation:  
Acts 7:54-8:3 and Acts 9:23-25

**A Memory Verse:** "So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!" 2 Corinthians 5:17 (NRSV)

#### The meaning of the story in a nutshell:

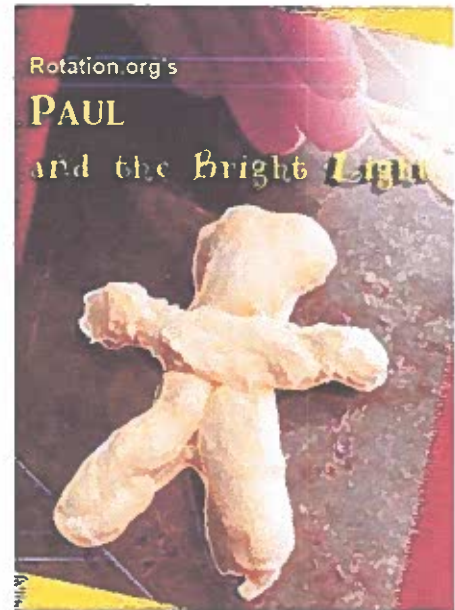
When Saul, later known as Paul, met Jesus on the Road to Damascus, his life was dramatically changed.

Encountering Jesus can transform our lives as well, if we are willing to have our eyes opened and become one of his disciples.

#### Lesson objectives for the Rotation:

After completing this Rotation, participants will be able to:

- Locate the story in the Book of Acts.
- Outline the basics of the story, who's in it, what happened.
- Describe how Saul/Paul was transformed by meeting and believing in Jesus.



- Know that Jesus' "amazing grace" reaches out even to those who resist him or hate him.
- Discuss ways Jesus encounters us and changes us, and steps we can take to help others "see" Jesus and become his disciple.

## For Rotation

This story is a great example of why we in Rotation teach a story for more than one week. It has so much information and ways to look at it that one week simply would not do it justice. Not at all. It is a critical story to explore and drive into memory over several weeks for several reasons:

- 1. Because it lays the foundation for what is arguably the greatest story in the New Testament after Jesus' —the ministry of Paul and the spread of the Gospel beyond Israel.** Everything else we will read about Paul in Acts and from his letters stems from his personal transformative encounter in the Acts 9 story.
- 2. Because Saul's Conversion to Paul is an "archetype" for each of our conversion stories as well.** Saul was very religious, but it wasn't until he personally encountered Christ that his steadfast faith and real ministry began.
- 3. Because it reveals Christ as still present, not gone at all, *and continuing to forgive and reach out to those who rejected him.*** This is the good news of the story:

If it can happen to Saul the persecutor, it can happen to us.

Amazing Grace ⇒ Amazing Transformation

∞ As the weeks unfold, you will want to teach that transformation is an ongoing-process in our lives, and not merely a specific event. Paul says that we continue to grow in Christ. He "presses on toward the goal." (Phil 3:14). The initial and ongoing encounters with Christ's Holy Spirit can be dramatic for some and subtle for others. Indeed, many people have them but don't recognize them or understand them, and part of your task as a teacher is to help prepare students to recognize Christ's presence. Let them know that Jesus is a personal presence, and not merely an abstract idea or religious practice (such as coming to church).

∞ Christ's Spirit can feel like wrestling with our conscience (Jacob), like being blind then "seeing" (Paul), It can feel like comfort in adversity (Mary), strength of conviction (Peter), love when others condemn, caring when other reject, the right words when looking for guidance, peace in the middle of strife, etc. etc. We often don't see or feel Christ's Spirit until after the fact.... as it transforms you -- makes you bear its fruit (peace, patience, kindness....etc, Galatians 5).

It is also important to teach you do not need to identify a "personal encounter" in order to think you are "saved." Jesus died for Saul on the cross long before he met Saul on the road. And many others Christians never had a Damascus Road encounter like Saul's. Saul needed the presence and challenge of Christ, but the story says he also needed to pray and have OTHERS enter his life and lead it towards his baptism. And Christ was only getting started with him.

## Bible Background Notes for Teachers

### It is easy to understand why Jesus chose to appear to Saul.

Saul was a man immersed in three cultures - Greek, Roman, and Jewish. He was trained in the scriptures as Pharisee (Acts 22). And he could support himself as a tentmaker wherever he went (Acts 18). This made Saul uniquely equipped for taking Christ's message beyond the Jewish world, and into the Greek and Roman world.

☞ What this says to us is that our gifts, however mis-used or undeveloped, can be re-directed by Christ for his purposes, and that none of us is so damaged or "wrong" as to be beyond Christ's transformative reach.

### What do we know about Saul?

**Saul was born around the year 3 AD in Tarsus in southern Asia Minor, modern-day Turkey.**

Tarsus was a bustling commercial center brimming with Greek culture, education, and philosophy. It is believed that Saul came from a relatively wealthy family because he had Roman citizenship (which could be purchased), and because his letters reveal him to be well-educated.

**In Acts 22, Luke tells us that Saul was a student of Gamaliel, a famed Jewish scholar in Jerusalem.** In Philippians 3, Paul describes himself as a Pharisee. Pharisees were not priests, they were students of scripture who tried to enforce their strict interpretations and practices on others, believing that their salvation came through their own right-ness ("righteousness") of belief and practice.

It is questionable how closely Saul followed Gamaliel's teachings. In Acts 5:38-39, Luke describes Gamaliel as convincing the Sanhedrin not to kill the followers of Jesus, but instead, warning them that *"If their plans and actions only come from people, they will fail. But if their plans come from God, you won't be able to stop them."* Yet, according to Acts 7, the men who stoned Stephen "laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul."

Using a term from today's headlines, we could say that **at some point Saul became "radicalized."** By Acts 9, he is on his way with authority to persecute Jesus' followers in Damascus.

☞ What this says to us is that no one, however, wrong or evil, is out of Jesus' reach.

### Paul's Point of View on his Past and Transformation

In Philippians 3, Paul makes his case that his former point of view as a "faultless" Pharisee is now to be counted as "garbage" (waste, useless). **This theme of his world and perspective on his Jewish faith being turned upside down,** would be revisited by Paul many times. But rather than rejecting the past, he simply described it as something that was to be put in the past, The Old Testament and old ways simply prepared us for the transformation of God.

"this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 3:13-14)

✎ This theme should not be lost in our teaching. Saul was very religious, but that was not enough. Paul does not convert from one religion to another. He does not exchange one set of rules for another. **Paul's encounter with Christ transformed his entire understanding of "religion."** Instead of thinking we are saved by religious rules and practices, Paul repeatedly speaks about grace and love, forgiveness and tolerance. Paul's Good News finds its fullest expression in 1 Corinthians 13 where he describes "a more excellent way" —the way of Love.

### Saul to Paul: Whats in a name?

"Saul" literally means "**the one you prayed for**" or "the one you asked for" —which is reference to the people's demand for a king in 1 Samuel 8. But Saul always refers to himself by the Greek (Gentile) name of "Paul," which can be translated as "**small**" or "**humble.**" And in numerous letters, he refers to his "weakness" and "humility." So while some commentators simply ascribe the name change to a common custom among Jewish families living in the Gentile world to have both a Hebrew and a Gentile name, we can be sure that to Paul, his Gentile name was a perspective as well.

✎ Perhaps not so coincidentally, our students are "small" in age and stature, and their talents are only beginning to be revealed. In a world that encourages them to "be big," "be the answer to prayer" or be #1 (literally: "be Saul"), "be gifted." Paul's name change and experience points us in a different direction. **It is the upward call that humble-Paul now values, and calls us to strive for** (Philippians 3).

---

## Some Reflection Questions

### 1. Hearing Jesus' Voice

- Once he knew Jesus, how did his life change?
- Was the change instant and complete? Or did his life continue to be transformed?
- Ananias doesn't think he should help. He questions God. Is that okay to do?
- When Jesus speaks to us, how will we recognize his voice?

### 2. Persecution

- Jesus asked Saul, "Why are you persecuting me?" How do we "persecute" Jesus?
- How do we "hold other people's coats" while they are doing evil?
- How did Paul stand up for others once he became a Christian? And what price did he pay for doing the right things?

### 3. Called by Name

- Name some ways God tries to get our attention.  
*(lessons, scripture, experiences, other people, worship, service, adversity)*
- What are kinds of "blinding lights" and voices we might hear in our life?
- Can we hear God's voice speaking directly to us? How?
- When God calls, it is often to do something unexpected. What did Ananias feel like when he was called to do something hard, such as going to visit Saul, the infamous persecutor of Christians? How did Ananias obey?

### 4. Blinded to the truth, blinded to God

- God said to Ananias that Saul had been PRAYING in his blindness. What do you think he was praying for?
- What and Who sometimes shuts your eyes or ears to God's voice?
- Saul spent the rest of his life sharing the gospel with others, trying to help them "open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light" (Acts 26:18). What are YOU doing to help others see Christ? In your actions, behavior, words?

---

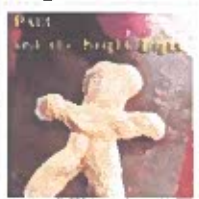
Written for the Rotation.org Writing Team by Jaymie Derden & Neil MacQueen

Copyright 2016, Rotation.org Inc.

 Attachments

Hide 

Images (1)



3/12/16 @ 11:07 AM \*

Open to Supporting Members

## (WT) Paul and the Bright Light ~ Video Workshop



**The Writing Team**   Fortifying our Supporting Members

Rotation.org Writing Team

### Paul and the Bright Light Video & Popcorn Workshop

#### Summary of Activities

Students will watch and discuss Nest's "Saul of Tarsus" video. They will use a special "popcorn reflection" activity to think about how God can change us and use gifts planted in us, just like he changed Saul's heart and put Paul's gifts to good use spreading the Gospel.



#### Scripture for the Lesson

**Acts 9:1-22**, the story of Saul's encounter with Christ on the Road to Damascus.

★ The scripture for this lesson is found in the 30 minute video and is not presented as a separate reading. The video also includes other parts of Saul's story, notably, what he was doing before he started down the Road to Damascus.

#### Lesson Objectives

See the [Bible Background](#) at rotation.org for this set's complete list of objectives.

The reflection in this particular lesson in the set emphasizes the idea that God doesn't merely want to "save" us, but transform us.

#### Preparation and Materials

- Read the [Bible Background](#) and scripture.
- Preview a copy of "Saul of Tarsus" from Nest Entertainment.
- Note where to stop in the video and ask questions (see lesson plan).
- Download or prep a video of popcorn exploding in slow-motion (see sources below).

- Popcorn, popper, cups. (The lesson reflection needs un-popped popcorn.)

### **Summary of the Saul of Tarsus Video**

Saul is changed forever when the resurrected Lord miraculously appears to him on the Road to Damascus. He becomes reborn as Paul and begins to evangelize for the sake of the Gospel, serving as one of the most influential missionaries in the New Testament. Paul's conversion on the Road to Damascus is a strong example of the power of Jesus Christ to change lives. This example reminds us that no matter what a person used to be, or how great a person's misdeeds—they can be rescued and made right by Jesus, and do great things as a faithful follower.

---

## **Lesson Plan**

### **Open with the Popcorn Demonstration**

Welcome students, explain how the lesson will unfold, and then invite them to come watch your **Popcorn Demonstration**.

**Say:** Who would like some popcorn? Pass out hard un-popped kernels. What's wrong with your popcorn? (hahaha)

**Now show them a piece of *popped* popcorn and ask,** How does a kernel become a nice fluffy and tasty piece of popcorn? Some of the children may know the answer. When you heat the kernels, a small amount of water inside the kernel explodes, turning the kernel inside out.

**Show the slow motion video of popcorn transforming from kernel to exploding fluffiness!** (This fun visual will become a strong hook for your message.)

**Tip:** Do not over-explain it. You will come back to what it represents in the Final Reflection.

Here's a terrific Slo-Mo Popcorn Video from Youtube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CXDstfD9ej0>



Tech Notes: If the link goes bad, please report it and find another. You can either download this video by pasting its URL into one of many Youtube download sites, such as, [ClipConverter.cc](http://www.clipconverter.cc), <http://www.clipconverter.cc> Or, you can bring in your laptop or smartphone and show it using your church's WIFI or cell service.

## Dig into the Saul of Tarsus Movie

Share some popped popcorn and invite students to settle in for the movie.

**Say:** Here are three questions I hope this video will help you answer. Write them on the board:

1. How was Saul like a hard popcorn kernel?
2. What was inside Saul that Jesus could transform into a great disciple?
3. How does God change or transform Saul **and each of us** from something hard and un-useful, to something tasty and blessed in the Christ's Kingdom?

♥*Show the Video: Saul of Tarsus (from Nest, approx 30 minutes)*♥

***Pause the video as soon as Saul starts down the Damascus Road, review what you've seen so far and ask these questions:***

- a. Was Saul an evil man?
- b. Why did he hate Christians so much? (Saul was acting with the approval of the authorities. They and he thought they were saving the nation by stomping out this dangerous new belief that Jesus was alive.)
- c. What traits or strengths does Saul seem to have? (Strong desire to do what he thought was right. Ability to speak to people. Knowledge of scripture.)

***At the end of the video ask these questions:***

- a. How is Ananias the "unsung hero" of this story?
- b. Saul started calling himself "Paul" which is the Greek (Gentile) word for "small" or "humble." How did Paul's experience of being rescued/saved by Jesus HUMBLE him? (Note: You will follow up on this idea in the final reflection.)

## Final Popcorn Reflection

**Say:** It is hard sometimes to express to our family and friends how we have changed, or want to change. It's embarrassing to admit we need help or need Jesus to save us. We'd like to think we can take care of ourselves without anyone's help. Our pride gets in the way. Maybe this is why Saul took

the name of "Paul" (small) because he had to HUMBLE himself to admit he had been wrong.

**Say:** Thing is... **Jesus doesn't just want us to be humble and admit our sins**, Jesus ALSO wants to enter our lives like a rush of mighty heat and turn us inside-out, to explode us into a new person of faith. But you have to let him. Even Saul had to let Jesus take over.

**Do: Have each student put their popcorn kernel into the popper.** (Add additional popcorn kernels as well.) Say a prayer that each person in the room would hear Jesus' voice like Saul did, humble themselves, and let Christ turned them into the kind of disciple Jesus needs them to be. ***Keep the lid off the popper, then turn on the popper and let the popcorn FLY!***

---

## Adaptations

**For younger students**, skip chapters 1, 3 and maybe 4 in the video to save time and stay focused on the story. Read the story from a storybook Bible to help younger students make the connection between the video and the Bible.

**For those with less than 40 minutes**, skip "chapters" 1, 3 and 4, and only show "chapters" 2, 5 and 6 on the DVD.

---

This lesson was donated to the Rotation.org Writing Team by Neil MacQueen. It originally appeared at his software website, [sundaysoftware.com](http://sundaysoftware.com).

Copyright 2016, Rotation.org Inc.

 Attachments

Show 

3/14/16 @ 9:54 AM \*

Views: 400

[Home](#) / [Sunday School Lessons and Resources](#) / [LESSONS: ACTS](#)  
/ [Writing Team Lesson Set: Paul and the Bright Light](#) / [\(WT\) Paul and the Bright Light ~ Video Workshop](#)

## (WT) Paul and the Bright Light ~ Cooking Workshop



The Writing Team Fortifying our Supporting Members

Rotation.org Writing Team

### Paul and the Bright Light

#### The "Bright Light" Cooking Workshop

##### Summary of Activities

Picking up on the imagery of the road to Damascus and "Straight" Street found in the story, students will construct, bake in a (real) oven, label, discuss, and then eat a "map of the story" that ends in a pool of baptismal blueberries. 😊

As a reflection option, they will also shape dough to represent their self/faith, and bake it in simple "bright light box" oven to reflect on how their own encounter with and call from Christ should, like it did for Paul, give rise to their own ministry as one of Christ's disciples.



##### Scripture for the Lesson

## Lesson Objectives

See the [Bible Background](#) at [rotation.org](http://rotation.org) for this set's complete list of objectives.

This workshop's aim is to create a strong sensory memory of the story through sight, smell, touch, taste, and use it to examine where WE are in our "conversion story." The Bible Background for this lesson set has a lot of insights and extra questions to stoke the teacher's input in the nooks and crannies of this cooking workshop.

## Preparation and Materials

- Read the [Bible Background](#) and scripture.
- Pillsbury Crescent Rolls, 1 can per map/sheet and 1 extra roll for "Dough Persons"
- 1/3 stick of butter per map/can of dough
- cinnamon sugar
- blueberries for the baptism location on your map
- Pizza cutters (2 per cookie sheet)
- Spatula and hotpads
- Cookie sheets (1 per map)
- Use an oven to bake the map
- Use a "bright light oven" to bake the dough people (baking dish and clamp lamp with 150 watt bulb)
- Cooking spray
- Have a large piece of white paper for each groups map
- Markers

The dough map seen in this lesson plan was made with 1 can of crescent roll dough. You can fit 1 map per cookie sheet.

**3 students can work on 1 map with 1 roll of dough.** Thus, if you have 6 students, make 2 maps and double all of the above ingredients, and so on.

★ See the photographs at the END of this lesson for assembly and baking tips.

---

## Lesson Plan

As with most Cooking Workshops, your study and discussion will be interspersed with your assembly and baking time. Get started early and keep it moving.

### Open

Welcome your students and tell them how the lesson will unfold.

1. First you'll read the story and make a few points.
2. Then you'll lead them to create an "edible map of the story" out of crescent roll dough.
3. Then they'll bake a "dough person" under a Bright Light while their map is baking in a real oven.

4. When everything is baked, they'll assemble, label, discuss, butter and sprinkle their creation with sugar, and enjoy.

## Bible Study

**Read the Acts 9 story of Paul and the Bright Light with your students.** Depending on their age, have them participate in the reading. (Watch your time.) Remind them who "Saul" would become, the greatest Apostle. Remind them that Saul had been at the stoning of Stephen holding the coats of the murderers.

**Ask:** Why would Jesus want to appear to THIS GUY! Surely there must have been other more "worthy" people on the Road that day for Jesus to talk to. (What does this story tell us about Jesus' desire to reach out to sinners? The Bible Background talks about this.)

**Ask:** What do you think was going through Saul's mind when he realized Jesus, the one he had hated, really was the Son of God? How would you have felt?

*Now let's create a map of this story!*

## Begin Creating and Baking the Story Map

Lay out baking sheets and unroll the dough on them. Before you give them cutting utensils, go over the idea of what their map might look like. DRAW IT on the board or table-paper, but encourage them to be creative in their own right. LIST the key parts of the Acts 9 story for them to refer to, and tell them which map items they "must" include. Remind them that they must make everything out of the dough given to them, and not to make their map pieces too small or thin as they will turn hard in the oven.

### Key parts of the story to recreate as map pieces:

1. Jerusalem
2. Road to Damascus
3. Bright Light, Voice of Christ
4. Street called Straight
5. Saul's Baptism and Beyond

Work quickly and have them transfer their creations to the second baking sheet which is ungreased. Place the map(s) into the oven and set the timer.



### Now turn towards creating their "Dough Person" for the Bright Light Oven.

1. After you have put the baking sheet with the map in the OVEN, **you will have about 10 minutes to let everyone make a "Dough Paul Person"** to represent themselves and then put their dough persons under a BRIGHT LIGHT OVEN you will quickly assemble. (Don't freak about the safety. Easy Bake Ovens have been cooking with light bulbs for decades.)

It takes about 12 to 15 minutes of baking time to bake a dough person under a bright light --depending on how you set up your light oven. Thus, your "map" will come out of the real oven ahead of your dough person. If you need to accelerate your dough people baking, finish them in the real oven. Note of caution: the light oven will get hot, treat it like you would any baking project.

**What you'll need to bake under a bright light:**

- A baking dish
- A clamp light with a 150 watt bulb
- Place the bulb within 1 to 2 inches of the dough.
- Assign a helper to watch the dough under the light.

**2. While the "Dough Paul Person" is baking,** your dough map will probably be ready to come out of the oven and be ready for transferring to your table top paper. Let the kids help you transfer it and begin to assemble and label their maps.

**3. About now...your Dough Paul Persons should be ready too!** Take them out of their Bright Light Oven and transfer them to your tabletop.

**4. Conduct a brief follow-up discussion,** assuring them that after they have answered a few questions, they'll get to butter, sprinkle and eat their creation!

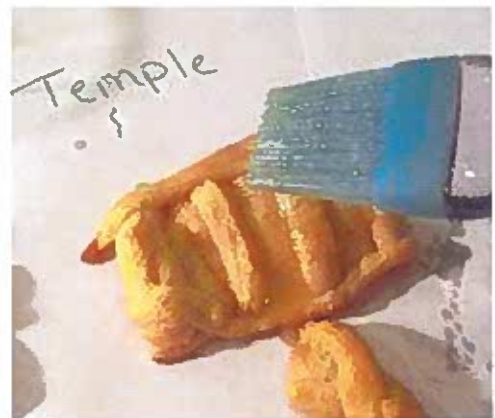
Complete the labeling of the map, asking them questions that lead to insights:

- "what happened there?"
- "what was Saul thinking here? or there?"
- "what was Jesus hoping would happen here, then?"
- "what were Saul's friends thinking here, and there?"

***Now invite the students to butter and sprinkle their maps with cinnamon sugar, and enjoy.\*\****

**While they eat, follow up with some personal questions:**

- When in your life have you felt "closest" to God (suggestions: prayer, death of a grandparent, Christmas, in nature)
- What activities here at church help people, help you feel closest to God?
- What could you do at home to listen to Jesus' voice?
- Who in our church and in your life has been like an Ananias to you?
- Where do you think you are on the Road right now?
  - Stuck in the Temple wondering what all this faith stuff is about?
  - Wandering towards Damascus trying to be religious?



- Hoping to encounter and hear Christ?
- Blind, confused and wondering what faith is all about?
- Seeing, believing, and ready to start telling and helping others in Jesus' name?

*\*\*Save part of your map to give to someone you care about after class.*

## Closing

Say: As you munch one last piece of our story today, munch on this thought, Saul had many gifts that Jesus wanted to put to good use to spread the Gospel. Saul was a determined man and a good speaker. He knew how to travel the Roman world, worshiped regularly, and he studied scripture. The only thing he needed was to believe in Jesus. You may be a wonderful person, a great student, a loving child, a good friend, and go to church regularly, —but do you believe that Jesus is your Lord, and will you serve him? **That's the most important thing anyone can ever ask you, and it's the most important answer you can ever give.**

## Photos and Tips for the Making and Baking Process...

Below is a one can of dough unrolled onto one sheet. This is enough to make one map. Spray your sheet first, then unroll the dough. Spraying the first sheet will make the dough easier to cut, shape, and transfer to the sheet you will use for baking in the oven. Do not spray the second sheet that you will use for baking.



Form the parts of your map and place them on the second sheet. You'll assemble them in the correct story-map shape AFTER they bake.

· The curved pieces represents Saul's "wrong" attitude and mistaken beliefs about Jesus that took him to Damascus. These shapes are merely ONE IDEA of how to shape dough to represent the parts of the story. You don't have to use a cross, for example, but instead, the kids could make a "bright light."



Don't over-bake the dough. It will be thinner than were you to make rolls, and thus, bake faster.

After baking, use a spatula to place the baked map pieces on a large sheet of paper that you can write on. Keep in mind that the butter and sugar will get all over this paper too.





Butter and cinnamon sugar make these rolls taste wonderful at the end of your lesson.

As we assembled the BAKED map, we labeled it with parts of the story and discussed what each meant both to Paul, ...and to us on our faith journey. It is this assembly and labeling that is a major opportunity for you to do your teaching.



Yes, that's blueberry compote for the baptism! We made arrows proceeding from Paul's baptism to represent what Paul (and we) did next after accepting Jesus.... telling others and serving him.



Right after we put the map in the oven, we started making our Dough Pauls and putting them together in our Bright Light Oven.

Resist the temptation to stick your Dough Pauls in the real oven. Baking your "Dough Paul" under bright light will be a terrific way to lock this lesson in their memory!.

Cooking under light is exotic, memorable and fun. It's also REALLY EASY. Just be sure you have a really strong bulb, 150 watts will do. Depending on your lesson timing turns out, you might be cooking your "Paul Doughs" at the same time as the map that's in the oven.

**The Dough Pauls will take a bit longer. Check them after 7 minutes and every minute afterwards.**



Baking "Dough Paul" with a 150 watt "bright light" creates a strong lesson memory.

### For Younger Students:

Use a Bible storybook. Rather than use words on the map, illustrate your ideas and points on the map.

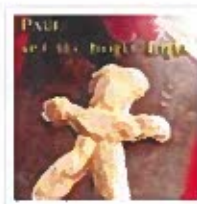
Written by the Rotation.org Writing Team

Copyright 2016, Rotation.org Inc.

 Attachments

Hide 

#### Images (9)





## (WT) Paul and the Bright Light ~ "How Sweet the Sound" (Music) Workshop



The Writing Team Fortifying our Supporting Members

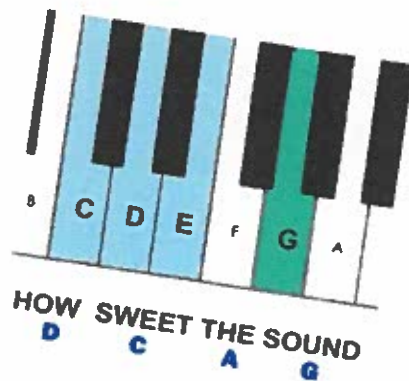
Rotation.org Writing Team

### Paul and the Bright Light "How Sweet the Sound" Music Workshop

#### Summary of Activities

Students will create and sing new lyrics to the tune of Amazing Grace\*\* turning it into "**Paul's Hymn About Christ's Amazing Grace**" that day on the Road to Damascus. They will also personalize the lyrics to express their own sense of God's amazing grace in their lives.

*You do not need to be a music teacher to teach this simple music workshop. You just need to be able to carry a tune, love kids, and reflect on meaning! The attached [Piano Keys Handout](#) is a simple guide to plunking out the tune.*



#### Scripture for the Lesson

Acts 9:1-22, Paul and Jesus on the Road to Damascus.

Additional Scripture for teacher preparation: Acts 7:54-8:3 and Acts 9:23-25

#### Lesson Objectives

See the [Bible Background](#) at rotation.org, for this set's complete list of objectives.

\*\*This music workshop aims to create a strong musical memory connection between the story of Paul's conversion, the hymn Amazing Grace, and the subject of Paul's conversion. From a multiple-

intelligence (Rotation Model) point of view, we are "hitching" our content to a beloved hymn that they will hear for the rest of their lives.

In addition to using the worksheet and singing your versions, we especially encourage you to have students "plunk out" the tune on the keyboard using the attached keyboard and song guide. Music is "brain glue," especially when you engage in making it!

## Preparation and Materials

- Read the [Bible Background](#) and scripture.
- Print the [Paul-Amazing-Grace Worksheet](#) and [Keyboard Guide](#) (attached).
- Assemble one or more keyboards in the classroom. The more the better.
- Pencils
- Invite someone with a piano or guitar to accompany the student's playing.

---

## Lesson Plan

### Overview

Following the Bible study, there is a two-part musical activity in this lesson. **The first part** involves working on new lyrics to the first verse of Amazing Grace using the Paul-Amazing-Grace-Worksheet (attached). The **second part** has them performing their new lyrics to music they create using the Piano-Keys handout (attached) and pianos (or electronic keyboards).

Watch your study time so that you have plenty of time to use the brain glue (music!) to help your lesson content "set." 😊 Other workshops in this Rotation lesson set will spend more time in the details of the passage itself.

### Open

**Welcome your students** and tell them what they'll be doing today. Play a quick game of "Name That Tune" with the notes of Amazing Grace. Younger children may recognize it, but it's not important that they do because by the end of class they will!

**In Name That Tune**, you play a few notes, then ask them to guess, then play a few more. If that doesn't help, play the entire tune and hum most of the words, but sing a few as 'clues' until they figure it out. At the end, mention that Amazing Grace is considered the most popular and beloved hymn of all time.



Now tell them a little bit about WHO wrote it (there are notes on the worksheet).

**Say:** By his own words, John Newton, the writer of Amazing Grace was an awful person.

**Ask:** What do we do with awful bad people when we catch them? Why doesn't God just get rid of them himself?

**Say and Ask:** Jesus taught us that God wants to save even the worst kind of sinners. Why does he want to?

**Say:** In today's story, we're going to read about another awful person named Saul. Saul lived during the time of Jesus, and after Jesus' resurrection and ascension into heaven, Saul went around persecuting Jesus' followers — which is to say, having them arrested and in some cases, put to death.

**Say:** But let's read part of Saul's story in the Book of Acts, and see what God wants to do with this terribly awful person.

### **Read Acts 9:1-22**

Depending on your age group, numbers and allotted time, you may read it aloud from the Bible or a storybook, or have your students read it aloud.

**After the reading, immediately ask:** "What was he trying to teach Saul by blinding him?" For older children, comment that "blindness" is a spiritual metaphor too. Saul was "blind" to Jesus' identity but made to "see" that Jesus was the Messiah.

**Say:** It's a simple story. Jesus saves awful Saul, and Saul becomes the Apostle Paul preaching the good news to others. So now lets JUMP to its meaning for YOU and ME.

**Ask:** What is this story trying to tell YOU about your condition, about what YOU need to have happen in your life?

**Say:** There are two kinds of people in this room today. Those who are blind to Jesus and need to see his amazing grace and let their life be changed. And those who have seen and believed in Jesus and need to tell others the good news of God's amazing grace.

### **Song Time!**

**Say:** John Newton, the slaver who wrote Amazing Grace, and Saul who became known as the Apostle Paul of the New Testament, were both saved by God's Amazing Grace. In today's music activity, **you're going to rewrite the lyrics to the first verse of Amazing Grace as if John Newton had written the words about SAUL instead of himself.**

**Give everyone a copy of the Paul-Amazing-Grace-Worksheet (attached).** Depending on the age of your students and class size, they may work alone or in pairs, or as a group on completing the worksheets.

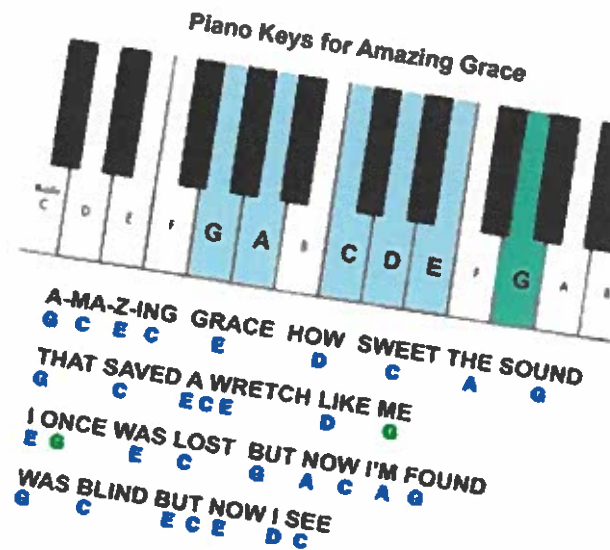
**After completing their worksheets...**

**You will now teach some or all of your students how to play the notes to Amazing Grace on the keyboard(s) using the *Piano Keys Handout*.**

Having an extra electronic keyboard or two, and maybe someone with a guitar will come in really handy!



TAPE the Piano Key Letters to your piano keys and have a music stand set up for each keyboard. Depending on your number of students and keyboards, you can assign one or two notes per student to "press" when the music calls for it. Some students may be able to do it all by themselves.



**Be flexible.** The more they play, and the more versions everyone hears, the stronger the memory.

You can have groups of student practicing their version of Amazing Grace with teaching assistant before playing it for the group.

**When they've practiced enough,** gather everyone for their Amazing Grace concert, playing the song several times, each time with a different set of lyrics created by the students on their worksheets.

**After each song-version is played,** make a few comments about some of their lyric choices. See the handout for some sample suggestions.

### Where's the reflection in this lesson?

It will take place every time they hear the song, "Amazing Grace."

**Tip:** Schedule the hymn in worship!

### Adaptations and Additions

Non-readers will need help with the worksheet and you should view the worksheet as a set of questions you help them to answer and fill-in for them, perhaps in small groups or as a class.

Younger children can plunk out the notes by sight while you sing aloud their version of the verse you helped them create.

## Additional Comments to Interject

What's so amazing about God's Grace? (it's unconditional and for all, no matter how "awful")

What is God's "grace"? (unconditional forgiveness, salvation, restoring, reviving, inspiring)

Like John Newton and Paul, what are we supposed to DO with God's Amazing Grace?

### For follow-up:

Watch Phil Wickham's terrific music video, "[This is Amazing Grace](#)," on Youtube.

He also has an official "[lyrics sing-along](#)" version.

---

Written by the Rotation.org Writing Team  
Copyright 2016, Rotation.org Inc.

 Attachments

Hide 

Images (3)



Files (2)

[Piano-Keys-Amazing-Grace.pdf](#)

[Paul-Amazing-Grace-Worksheet.docx](#)

## (WT) Paul and the Bright Light ~ Computer Workshop



The Writing Team Fortifying our Supporting Members

Rotation.org Writing Team

### Paul and the Bright Light Computer Workshop

#### Summary of Lesson Activities

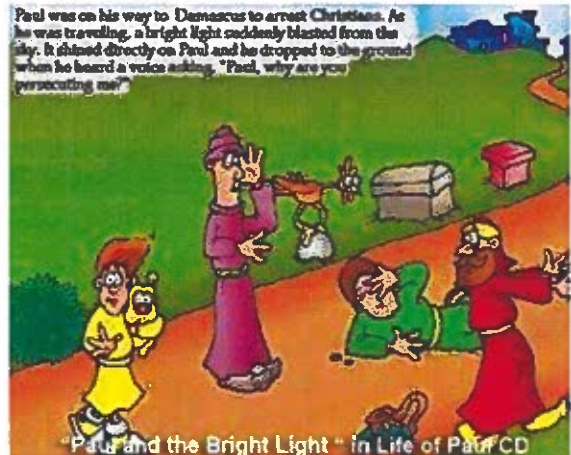
Students will explore the *Life of Paul* CD to learn the story of Saul's conversion on the Road to Damascus, think about the meaning of Paul's name ("small") and their own "spiritual name."

#### Scripture

Acts 9:1-22, Saul/Paul on the Road to Damascus

The scripture in this lesson plan is presented twice in the software, therefore, there is no separate scripture reading step in the lesson plan.

**Key Memory Verse:** "So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!" 2 Corinthians 5:17 (NRSV) ★ This verse is found in the memory scramble game in the software.



#### Lesson Objectives

See the [Bible Background](#) at rotation.org for this set's complete list of objectives.

#### Preparation and Materials

- Read the Bible Background.
- Install and Preview the *Life of Paul* CD.
- Print the *Life of Paul* CD outline from Sunday Software's website.

- Print the [Student Worksheet](#) attached to the end of this lesson and make a copy for each student.
- Sticky Nametags
- Pre-cut a pair of "something like fish scales" for each student to write on during the reflection.

### Tech Notes for the Software

Depending on your operating system, you may be able to set your screen display to have *Life of Paul* appear full screen. RIGHT click the *Life of Paul* startup icon and select Compatibility options to run your display in 640x480 mode. Verify that the Bible Time Theater video clip works. If the curtain just opens and closes, you need to manually install the version of Quicktime found on the CD.

## Lesson Plan

### Open

Welcome your students and tell them that in a few minutes, they'll be using the Life of Paul software. But first....

**Write the following list of words/names on the board** (or share them) and have your students pick one name/description that describes them. Suggest that it may not be a trait that others may know about them.

**As they reveal their chosen name, write it on a nametag and stick it to them.** Say, "for the rest of the lesson we will refer to you by that name." Invite them to explain why they think that word describes them. (This will segue into a discussion of the meaning of Saul's name change to Paul.)



Quiet	Faithful	Spiritual
Deep	Humble	Prayerful
Trustworthy	Honest	Persevering
Kind	Generous	Loving
Thoughtful	Forgiving	Helpful

**Ask** them if they know which of those words is what the name "Paul" means in the Greek language (humble or small).

**Say:** Explain that in today's story, we learn about a man named after Israel's first king, King Saul. And this man hated Christians. He thought they were fake. But as we will learn today, when Saul became a Christian, he changed his name to Paul, which means, "small." We don't think it meant he was short. Rather, we think Paul's name is his way of telling us about how he was changed by Jesus. "Small" can mean "humble," or "lowly" —someone who doesn't think they are better than others. **Jesus used the word "meek" to say the same thing.** (Matthew 5, the Beatitudes).

Now let's dive into the software to find out how the man named after a king, and who hated Jesus, came to name himself "small" and became one of the great followers of Jesus ever!

## Dive into the Software

**Have your students use the worksheet** attached to this lesson to guide them through the sections of the software for this particular lesson plan.

Remind the kids to work together, take turns, and complete their worksheets. Give them 15 minutes. Remember to sit with your students to guide them and provide structure.

**Start the Software in the Main Story: "Paul and the Bright Light"** and follow the instructions in the worksheet. After viewing the story and interacting with it a bit, students will go into the "Discover the Bible" section to locate and respond to a study note. **Optionally**, you may have them hear and see a narrated version of the scripture which has more detail from the story than the Paul and the Bright Light presentation had. Following that, they will view a video clip of Saul hearing Christ on the road. It's short, but leads to an interesting question on the worksheet.

**After they have completed the worksheet at the computer**, gather the class together away from the computers, but do not exit the program (tell them they'll get back to it in a bit).

Sit in a discussion area with your worksheets and go over their answers. The key point of your discussion time is the "experience of conversion."

**Discuss the topic of "conversion"** as befits your church's theological tradition and age group. Be diligent to express the fact that NOT ALL Christians have a single or dramatic conversion experience like Paul did. Many grow up in the faith, and they come to know Christ gradually, but all share one common experience: feeling Christ has personally reached out to them, and having a personal relationship with him. Jesus is more than just an idea.

**Point out** that even Paul had many things which prepared him to accept Jesus. He went to worship, he studied scripture, and he prayed.

**Ask:** What was Saul's faith missing? (a personal relationship with Christ —knowing who Jesus is. He was blind to it. He was so sure of the "old" way of his religion that he couldn't see what God was trying to do. So God stepped in, as he usually has to do with all of us.

**Ask:** How did Saul's conversion to belief in Jesus change him? Look at his name change! His name means, "small" or "humble."

**Ask:** If Jesus is the one who changes our minds, what's the purpose of the Church then? (*help, support, continued learning, and a way to help spread the good news and serve other*)

## Reflect

**Pull out the stack of "paper fish scales" you prepared ahead of time.** Hand one to each student and ask them to write on the fish scale **"something that keeps people from believing in Jesus."**

Once they've done that, have everyone share their "scale." Have them place that "scale" in front of them so others can see it. Now hand them a second scale and ask them to pick one of the scales someone else shared and write it on their second scale. These two scales are to go home with the student as reminders. Stick them under the edges of their nametag.



Possible answers: doubt he was the Son of God, don't care, don't think he exists, too busy, too selfish, unwilling to give up, fear of God. Feel free to offer thoughts on these.

## Play the Memory Verse Game

It's found in the Fun and Games Section in the Life of Paul software.

To play, pick one of these two memory verses from the game, as they both address "change" that comes with belief.

2 Corinthians 5:17... the old life is gone, the new life ....

Galatians 5:22 fruit in us: love, joy, peace ....

---

## Adaptations for Younger Children

Younger children will need a "Bible Lab Buddy" at the computer to work through the discussion questions and write down the children's responses. You may choose to simply have the "Buddy" conduct the discussion at the computer and eliminate the worksheet and the discussion about "conversion."

Help them write on their scales and stick the scales below their nametags.

---

Written by Neil MacQueen for the Rotation.org Writing Team  
Copyright 2016, Rotation.org Inc.

Pictured: Main Menu from Life of Paul CD

 Attachments

Hide 

Images (3)



Files (1)

[Student Handout for Paul and the Bright Light.pdf](#)

# Student Handout for Paul and the Bright Light

For use with the Life of Paul CD in the Computer Workshop



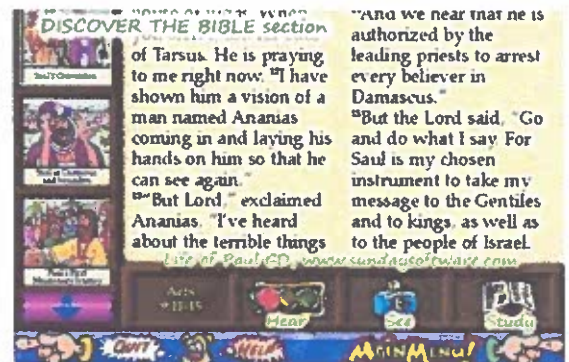
## 1. View the Paul and the Bright Light story and answer questions a, b, c, d, e below...

- What was Saul/Paul going to do in Damascus?
- What do you suppose Paul's friends thought when Paul said, "Jesus appeared as a bright light and talked to me!"
- Have you ever heard Jesus' voice or felt his presence? Where and what was it like? (If "no," tell us what you think it might make you feel like!)
- Paul's whole purpose in life has been turned upside-down and shown to be false. What do you think was going through Paul's mind as he was led to the house on Straight Street?
- Name something God wants you to give up or change about yourself that would help you become a stronger follower of Jesus.

## 2. Go into the Discover the Bible section.

Read the Study Note at Acts 9:11 "*Memory Verses: ... fruit: love, joy, peace....*" and answer this question:

According to the study note, what are some of the signs that you are a believer in Jesus?



## 3. CONTINUE into the BIBLE TIME THEATER

Watch the first video: "Paul's Conversion" and answer these questions:

- Why do you think Jesus had to use a Bright Light to get Paul's attention? Why not just a voice?
- What things does Jesus use in YOUR world to try and get YOUR attention?