



# the Source

*Let anyone who is thirsty come to me...*

Paul has the most dramatic conversion story in the New Testament. His fervor for Christ, along with his moving testimony, helped make Paul the successful apostle to the Gentiles. Though God used all of Paul's experiences to prepare him for the work God appointed Paul to do, his work for Christ began the moment he met Jesus on the road to Damascus.

Likewise, each of us has a defining moment in our Christian life. It may not be a dramatic one, or even one that we can pinpoint exactly, but our witness—like Paul's—began the moment we met Christ. For me, that was so early in my life that I can't remember not knowing Christ. I grew up in the church, as did many of you. My witness began long ago when I met Jesus, but my story continues to evolve as I grow to know Christ better and allow Him to shine His light of truth into the dark recesses of my heart.

These days, my biggest challenge is seeking God's direction in witnessing to one of my best friends who is an atheist. I know I cannot preach to her; she is already embittered toward the church. Instead, I can only love her and be a true friend to her. I have had a few moments over the years to answer questions and share with my friend what I believe. And I know my study of the Word is preparing me for future questions. My prayers are for God to soften her heart; for I know that without His intercession, my witness is negligible.

My story is my witness. *"It is vital and tailor-made for another to receive it."* But perhaps at this point, living my story is more important than telling my story. As long as I live out my life in the full joy and abundance of Christ's love, may God bless the living and the telling. Amen.

— Paula Holmes, First Church member

## Consider the Source Acts 26:9-20

### A Family Affair

This week's scripture is Acts 26:9-20. In these verses Paul tells how he had been an enemy to Christians and bullied them at all opportunities. Then Paul had a life changing experience: he chose to believe in Jesus, and to share Jesus with others. The Holy Spirit empowered Paul to share his story with many others. Paul is a great example for us as we talk about Jesus with others. Not everyone will want to hear about Jesus, but some will want to hear more. The better we know the Bible, the more we are able to answer questions. Paul told his story about what Jesus had done for him.

What is your favorite story about Jesus? What does it mean to you to have Jesus in your life? As a family, take turns sharing. With whom can you share Jesus this week? As Christians, we are called to act in our faith, not only with our mouths, but also with our lives. Discuss ways that your actions reflect God's love. Can you be a friend to a new person at school? Can you invite a friend to Sunday School or J- Team?

*Pray together: Dear God, Thank you for giving us the example of Paul. Help us, like Paul, to share about you, no matter what kind of response we receive. Amen.*

— Jennifer Hall, Director of Children's Ministry

### Monday: Acts 26:9-12

Here Paul is defending himself before King Agrippa, a descendant of Herod, by telling of his pre-conversion days as a persecutor of Christians in Jerusalem and foreign cities.

- Are there things in your past that God has used to make you an effective witness for Christ?
- How have you learned from the mistakes of your past?
- Has God ever brought goodness out of a bad situation in your life?

### Tuesday: Acts 26:13-15

On the road to Damascus, the risen Christ confronts Paul, blinding him with His glory and asking Paul why he is persecuting Him and harming himself.

- Are there hidden places in your heart that need Christ's shining light to expose sin?
- Are there obsessions in your life for which you need Christ's illumination to turn them to good works for Christ?

### Wednesday: Acts 26:16-17a

Jesus appoints Paul as His servant and witness to the Jews and the Gentiles.

- Why is it important that Jesus includes the Gentiles here?
- Who in your sphere of influence needs to hear your story as a witness of your faith?

### Thursday: Acts 26:17b-18

Jesus gives Paul his task of turning the people from their sins toward sanctification.

- Are there people in your life who live in darkness?
- How can you shine Christ's light in their lives?
- How are you changed because of your experience with Jesus?
- How do you show your gratitude to God for saving you from your sins?

### Friday: Acts 9:1-19

Read this earlier account of Paul's conversion.

- Think about the faith Ananias displayed in this account.
- Why is his obedience so impressive?

### Prayer:

Dear Heavenly Father,  
Help us to see clearly and recognize when we fail to honor you. Forgive us and help us to want what you want and to desire to please you. Thank You for loving us and for sending Your Son as our Redeemer so that through faith in Him we are forgiven of our sins and restored to a right relationship with You. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.