



Saul Meets Jesus

FAMILIES IN TRUTH

Acts 2



Saul was a man who was trained from childhood to keep the letter of God's Law, but he completely missed the heart of God (Isaiah 29:13). But Jesus lovingly pursued Saul, and Saul finally saw the Light.

Day #1: Truth Matters

Have you ever had the wrong idea about a person? For example, maybe there was someone who didn't talk much when you first met, so you thought he or she wasn't very nice. Later you realized that the person was really nice; he or she was just too shy to talk to you at first. It would be very sad to hold on to the wrong impression of someone. In this case, you might miss out on a wonderful friendship if you had not found out the truth about that person.

Saul had the wrong idea about God. Saul was taught that God was more interested in people who kept lots of rules than those with a pure heart. Saul also thought that God did not approve of Jesus! Saul thought that God would be glad if he harmed the people who followed Jesus. Wow! Saul could not have been more wrong about the Lord. Saul's beliefs controlled his actions. He worked hard at harming every believer he could find.

† Saul said: *And I was so eager that I even made trouble for the church. I did everything the Law demands in order to please God.* - Philippians 3:6 CEV

Paul believed these things with all his heart, but he believed the wrong thing! Believing what is **true** matters! Saul wanted to please God, but because of his wrong beliefs and actions, he did just the opposite. He wanted to do the right thing, but he did the wrong thing.

* You may *want* to please God and do the right thing, but if you have the wrong beliefs about God, you will probably do the wrong things. Be sure to get the truth about who God is from the one true source: His Word, the Bible.

Day #2: The Light

When you enter a dark room, what's the first thing you do? (Turn on the light.) Why do you turn on the light? (So you can see where you're going, so you won't trip and fall.) Light allows us to see what is hidden in the dark. The light shows us the right way to go. It keeps us from getting hurt.

Jesus told His disciples:

† *I am the Light of the world. Those who follow Me will never walk in darkness. They will have the Light that leads to life.* - John 8:12b

Saul was living his life in the darkness. He lived in anger and violence. He didn't even realize how evil his actions were. He didn't know he was separated from God. He didn't know because he had never seen the Light.

When Saul traveled toward the city of Damascus in order to arrest followers of Jesus, "Suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him." (Acts 9:3b)

That amazing Light was Jesus. By His grace, Jesus lovingly made Himself known to Saul. Once the light of Jesus shone on Saul, and Saul believed that Jesus was the Lord, Saul was changed forever. He would no longer walk in the darkness of his sin. He would no longer walk on the path that leads to death, separated from God. Jesus showed Saul the path that leads to new life!

* Parent's: Tell your child(ren) the story of when you first encountered Jesus, the Light of the World. Kids: Can you explain when you first met Jesus? It is great to practice telling your story!

Day #3: Blindness

God often gives us a physical symbol to help us understand a spiritual truth. Jesus took away Saul's sight for a short time.

Kids, close your eyes, and **keep them closed** while your parent reads today.

For his entire life, Saul had been blind to the truth that Jesus was the Messiah. The truth of Jesus had always existed, but Saul chose not to see it. All of the Scripture, which Saul knew very well, gave clues about Jesus. Many people who knew Jesus told the truth about Him. But Saul did not believe. He kept

Day #3 continued:

his eyes - and heart - closed to the truth.

Saul lived in spiritual darkness. He could not "see" God's plan for his life. He could not bring glory to God, and he could not live a peaceful, joy-filled life.

Finally, when Saul came face to face with Jesus; his spiritual eyes were opened. Kids, **open your eyes!**

Many people are just like Saul, closing their eyes to the truth. But God wants people to know Him. He makes His existence clear to anyone who is willing to look for Him.



For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see His invisible qualities - His eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God. - Romans 1:20



Go outside and look at the things God has made. List 3 things in creation and discuss what those things tell you about the God who created them. Pray for someone that you know who is blind spiritually. Pray for the opportunity to tell him or her one of God's amazing characteristics. Pray that they will "see" the truth about God.

Day #4: Great Exchange

Do you like having to clean your room? Most kids would answer "No!" to this question. But what if you were cleaning out old, worn out toys to make room for incredible new toys? Would you give up a run down, broken remote control car that does not work in order to receive a new, shiny, turbo-charged car that would NEVER need new batteries? That would be a GREAT exchange!

When Jesus returned to His father and sent His Holy Spirit to fill the believers, He performed an even GREATER exchange!



Anyone who believes in Christ is a new creation. The old is gone! The new has come! - 2 Corinthians 5:17

Jesus took away our broken, powerless, human nature and replaced it with God's Holy Spirit. Our old nature wants to sin against God (Romans 8:7). On our own, we are powerless to keep from sinning. But by God's grace, He fills believers with His Holy Spirit, and His Spirit gives us power over sin (Galatians 5:16). But the blessing doesn't end there! In Romans 8:6, Paul tells us, "The mind controlled by the Spirit brings life and peace."

Saul was once controlled by his sinful nature. He sinned terribly against God and God's people. But then Saul met Jesus and put his trust in Him. God

Day #4 continued:

made Saul into a new creation. As a symbol of this, God changed Saul's name to **Paul**. When God filled Paul with His Holy Spirit, the power of sin in Paul's life was broken. He stopped harming people.

When Paul was filled with the Holy Spirit, he changed from a man filled with anger, violence, and death to a man of peace and life. He spent the rest of his life teaching God's good news - even to people who tried to harm him (Acts 21:33-34; 22:1-22).



What are some words that describe a God who would replace your sinful nature with His own perfect, power-filled Spirit?

Day #5: Justice. Mercy. Grace.

What if Paul lived in our day and had to go to court for the crimes he committed against the believers? The lawyers would give proof that Paul had arrested innocent people. He beat them, threw them in jail, and even had some killed. The judge would look at Paul and ask if he had done these terrible things. Paul would look up and reply, "Guilty."

A fair judge would sentence Paul to suffer the same things that Paul had done to others: beating, imprisonment, and finally, death. This is what Paul *deserved*. Paul could not complain, because the judgment would be **just** (Romans 6:23).

But what if this judge did something totally unexpected? What if the judge told Paul that the judge's own son would take Paul's punishment for him? The son was completely innocent, but he would take Paul's punishment (Romans 3:24). Amazingly, Paul would not suffer the punishment for his own crimes. Not receiving the punishment Paul deserved is called **mercy**.



Paul said: *God had mercy on me so that Christ Jesus could use me as a prime example of His great patience with even the worst sinners. Then others will realize that they, too, can believe in Him and receive eternal life. - 1 Timothy 1:16 NLT*

In addition, the judge told Paul that he would treat him as if he were his own son. The judge would give Paul power and authority, and he would make Paul his own messenger. These undeserved blessings are called **grace**.

Through faith in Jesus we have received God's grace. In that grace we stand. We are full of joy because we expect to share in God's glory. - Romans 5:2



What is one way you can show your thankfulness to God for His mercy and grace to you? (Colossians 3:16)