



**Bible Point** ▶

# God calls us to follow him.

## Bible Verse

“I am the resurrection and the life” (John 11:25a).

## Growing Closer to Jesus

- Children will
- learn how Saul changed,
  - understand that God wants us to follow him,
  - tell Pockets how important it is to follow God, and
  - act out ways to follow God.

## Teacher Enrichment

### Bible Basis

#### ■ Saul sees a blinding light.

**Acts  
9:1-9**



Saul was a zealous Jew, and he did all he could to oppose the name of Jesus. Saul was traveling to Damascus to arrest Christians when Jesus met him on the road. A light he later described as “brighter than the sun” (Acts 26:13) flashed out of heaven, and Saul dropped to the ground.

When Jesus questioned Saul and told Saul who he was, the truth of all that had happened must have swept through Saul like a flood. In his zeal for God, he had been persecuting those who believed what was true!

Saul of Tarsus was blinded and remained that way as he waited in Damascus for three days. Regarding whether he became Paul after this conversion, the truth is that “Saul” was his Jewish name but “Paul” was the Roman equivalent by which he became better known.










### Prayer

- Read 2 Corinthians 5:17.
- How does this passage apply to Saul’s story? to your own story?
- Pray: Lord, thank you for making me a new creation in Christ. Help me to show your love to my students by...

## Before the Lesson

- Collect the necessary items for the activities you plan to use. Refer to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies columns to determine what you’ll need.
- Make photocopies of the “Today I Learned...” handout at the end of this lesson to send home with your children.
- Pray for the children in your class and for God’s direction in teaching the lesson.

# This Lesson at a Glance

	What Children Will Do	Classroom Supplies	Learning Lab Supplies
<b>Welcome Time</b>	<b>Welcome!</b> —Receive name tags, and be greeted by the teacher.	“Butterfly Name Tags” (p. 26), markers, tape or safety pins	
<b>Let’s Get Started</b>  Direct children to one or more of the optional activities until everyone arrives.	<b>Option 1: Common Senses</b> —Explore items without seeing them.	Lemons, whole cloves, ice, music box, paper bowls, toy, blindfolds	
	<b>Option 2: Calling All Voices</b> —Record their voices, and guess who is speaking.	Audio recorder with speakers for playback	
	<b>Option 3: Bright Lights</b> —Make a bright lights drawing.	4x6 index cards, crayons, paper clips	
	<b>Pick Up Our Toys</b> —Sing a song as they pick up toys, and gather for Bible Story Time.	CD player	
<b>Bible Story Time</b>	<b>Setting the Stage</b> —Compare a pop-up toy to today’s Bible Story.		
	<b>Bible Song and Prayer Time</b> —Sing a song, bring out the Bible, and pray together.	Bible, construction paper, scissors, CD player, basket or box	
	<b>Hear and Tell the Bible Story</b> —Hear the account from Acts 9:1-9 of Saul’s experience on the road to Damascus.	Bible, CD player, flashlights	
	<b>Do the Bible Story</b> —Act out ways to show they follow God.		
<b>Closing</b>  	<b>Pockets Follows</b> —Tell Pockets how important it is to follow God.		
	<b>Fun Following</b> —Sing, and then share ways they’ll try to follow God.	CD player	

\*See the end of this lesson for extra-time ideas and supplies.

## Welcome Time

### Welcome!

**SUPPLIES:** “Butterfly Name Tags” handout (p. 26), markers, tape or safety pins

- Bend down and make eye contact with children as they arrive.
- Greet each child individually with an enthusiastic smile.
- Thank each child for coming to class today.
- As children arrive, ask them about last week’s “Today I Learned...” activities. Ask questions such as “How did you celebrate Jesus’ resurrection?” and “Who did you tell the good news that Jesus is alive?”
- Say: **Today we’re going to learn that** ► ***God calls us to follow him.***
- Hand out the butterfly name tags children made in the first lesson, and help them attach the name tags to their clothing. If some of the name tags were damaged or if some of the children weren’t in class that week, have them make new name tags using the photocopiable patterns.
- Direct children to the Let’s Get Started activities you’ve set up.



It’s important to say the Bible Point just as it’s written in each activity. Repeating the Bible Point over and over throughout the lesson will help kids remember it and apply it to their lives.



## Let’s Get Started

Set up one or more of the following activities for children to do as they arrive. After you greet each child, invite him or her to choose an activity.

Circulate among the children to offer help as needed and direct children’s conversation toward today’s lesson. Ask questions such as “Why is it important to follow God?” or “Whose voices can you recognize on the phone?”

### Option 1: Common Senses

**SUPPLIES:** lemons, whole cloves, ice, music box, paper bowls, toy, blindfolds



On a table set out sensory items such as lemons, a bowl of whole cloves, a bowl of ice, Pockets the Kangaroo, and a music box or child’s wind-up toy. Form pairs and blindfold one partner in each pair. Have the sighted children lead their partners in touching, smelling, or listening to the sensory items you’ve set out. Then have partners trade places. Talk about what it’s like to be “blind.” Explain that today children will hear about a man who became blind in order to learn to follow God.



If a child objects to being blindfolded, have the child simply close his or her eyes for the activity.



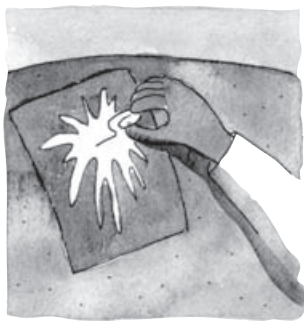
Make sure to return Learning Lab items back to the box when you’re done using them so they can be used in future lessons!



### Option 2: Calling All Voices

**SUPPLIES:** audio recording device with speakers for playback

Set out a recorder such as a digital recorder with speakers, or a cassette player. Let children record cheerful messages. After several children have had a turn, replay the recordings and have children guess who is speaking. Tell children that in today’s story they’ll hear how a man named Saul heard Jesus’ voice.



### ■ Option 3: Bright Lights

**SUPPLIES:** 4x6 index cards, crayons, paper clips

Set out crayons, paper clips, and 4x6 index cards. Show children how to color their index cards with bright colors such as yellow, orange, and red. When children have filled their cards with color, have them scribble heavily over the cards with black crayon. Then have children use straightened paper clips to scrape off the black crayon, revealing the bright colors underneath. Encourage children to draw pictures of bright lights, such as fireworks, the sun, the moon, and the stars. Explain that in today's story they'll hear how a man named Saul was blinded by a bright light from heaven.

When everyone has arrived and you're ready to move on to the Bible Story Time, encourage the children to finish what they're doing and get ready to clean up.

### ■ Pick Up Our Toys

**SUPPLIES:** CD player



Lead children in singing "Pick Up Our Toys" (track 2) with the CD to the tune of "Skip to My Lou." Encourage the children to sing along as they help clean up the room.

If you want to include the names of all the children in your class, sing the song without the CD and repeat the naming section. If you choose to use the CD, vary the names you use each week.



**We will pick up our toys.  
We will pick up our toys.  
We will pick up our toys  
And put them all away.**

**There's [name] picking up toys.  
There's [name] picking up toys.  
There's [name] picking up toys,  
Putting them all away.**

*(Repeat.)*

## Bible Story Time

### ■ Setting the Stage

**SUPPLIES:** none



Tell the children you'll clap your hands to get their attention. Explain that when you clap, the children are to stop what they're doing, raise their hands, and focus on you. Encourage children to respond quickly so you'll have time for all the fun activities you've planned.

Gather the children together around a table and say: **In our Bible lesson today we will learn about a man who did some very mean things to the people who**

followed Jesus. His name was Saul. Whenever Saul heard someone talking about God's Son, he tried to put that person in jail. That's how much he hated the followers of Jesus. Many people were afraid of Saul. When they saw him, they froze in their tracks, and then popped up and got away as fast as they could. Turn a *jumbo popper* inside out and place it on the table. Hold down the sides, and then let go. (You might want to practice popping the *jumbo poppers* in advance.)

Let the children take turns popping the *jumbo poppers*, and then ask: • **If you had met Saul as you walked down the road, what would you have done?** (I would tell him about Jesus; I'd ask him why he is so mean; I would've popped up and run the other way.)

• **What did you like about popping the *jumbo poppers*?** (They popped really high; they made me jump because they bounced so quickly.)

Say: **God did something amazing that caused Saul to suddenly change direction and change from the bad things he was doing and go God's way instead. Let's learn how ► God calls us to follow him, too.**

Return the *jumbo poppers* to the Learning Lab.



## ■ Bible Song and Prayer Time

*SUPPLIES: Bible, construction paper, scissors, basket or box, CD player*



track 3

Before class, make surprise cards for this activity by cutting construction paper into 2x6-inch slips. Prepare a surprise card for each child plus a few extras for visitors. Fold the cards in half, and then stamp the *footprint stamp* inside one of them. Bookmark **Acts 9:1-9** in the Bible you'll be using.

Have children sit in a circle. Say: **Now it's time to choose a Bible person to bring me the Bible marked with today's Bible story. As we sing our Bible song, I'll pass out the surprise cards. Don't look inside your surprise card until the song is over.**

Lead the children in singing "Read God's Book" (track 3) with the CD to the tune of "The Muffin Man." As you sing, pass out the folded surprise cards.



**SING**

**Now it's time to read God's book,  
Read God's book, read God's book.  
Now it's time to read God's book.  
Let's hear a Bible story.**

**Now it's time to read God's book,  
Read God's book, read God's book.  
Now it's time to read God's book.  
Let's hear a Bible story.**

*(Repeat.)*

After the song, say: **You may look inside your surprise cards. The person who has the footprints stamped inside his or her card will be our Bible person for today.**

Identify the Bible person, and then have the rest of the children clap for him or her. Ask the Bible person to bring you the Bible. Help the Bible person open the Bible to





the marked place and show the children where your story comes from. Then have the Bible person sit down.

Say: [Name] **was our special Bible person today. Each week, we'll have only one special Bible person, but each one of you is a special part of our class! Today we're all learning that ►God calls us to follow him.**

**Let's say a special prayer now and ask God to teach us to follow him. I'll pass around this basket. When the basket comes to you, put your surprise card in it and say, "God, teach me to follow you."**

Pass around the basket or box. When you've collected everyone's surprise card, set the basket aside and pick up the Bible. Lead children in this prayer: **Dear God, thank you for the Bible and all the stories in it. Teach us today to follow you. In Jesus' name, amen.**

## ■ Hear and Tell the Bible Story

**SUPPLIES:** Bible, CD player, flashlights



Have children sit in a circle. Point to the Bible and say: **Our Bible story comes from the book of Acts in the Bible. Today we'll learn about Saul, a man who didn't like Jesus' followers. But God got Saul's attention in an amazing way.**

Distribute two or three flashlights around the circle. **When you hear Saul's name in the story, flash your flashlight three times. Then pass it to the person next to you. If you don't have a flashlight, clap your hands when you hear Saul's name.**

Bring out the *Bible Big Book: Saul's Surprise*. Open the book to page 1, and turn the page when you hear the chime on the CD. Dim the lights a little, and play "Blinding Light" (track 14) on the CD. Be sure children pass the flashlights around the circle so everyone has a turn.

When the track is over, turn off the CD player, collect the flashlights, and show children the picture on page 1. Say: **Let's look at the pictures of our Bible story and remember what happened to Saul.**

Ask: • **Whom did Saul want to put in prison? Why?** (Jesus' followers because he didn't like them; Christians because he didn't believe that Jesus was really God's Son.)

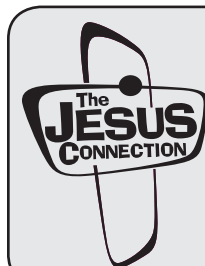
Turn the page to show children pages 2 and 3.

Ask: • **What happened to Saul?** (God blinded him; Jesus talked to him; God sent a bright light to get his attention.)

• **What did God want Saul to do?** (Follow him; stop being mean to Jesus' followers.)

• **What did Saul do when Jesus spoke to him?** (Obeyed; did what Jesus said to do; went to Damascus.)

This Bible story is featured in the new *My First Hands-On Bible™*. Order several now for your ministry at [group.com](http://group.com).



Put the *Bible Big Book* away and out of sight. Say: **God called Saul to stop being mean to Jesus' followers, turn his life around, and follow God. ►God calls us to follow him, too. We are following God when we believe in his Son, Jesus. If we are sorry for our sins and we put our trust in Jesus, we will be friends with Jesus forever. Let's learn what we can do to show we're listening to God's call.**

## ■ Do the Bible Story

*SUPPLIES: none*



Have children scatter around the room and sit down. Say: **God sent a blinding light to get Saul's attention. In this game, you'll see some funny lights while you're following, too! I'll say a little rhyme and then give a pair of *rainbow glasses* to two people. Those children will put on the glasses, follow me around the room, and copy my actions. The rest of you can copy my motions right where you're sitting. Then my Followers will each give the *rainbow glasses* to someone else and they'll become Followers, too. We'll continue until everyone is following! Ready?**

Say the rhyme, and then give a pair of glasses to two children.

**God calls us to follow him.** (*Point to the sky.*)

**He's calling me and you!** (*Point to yourself and then the children.*)

**When we listen to God's call** (*cup your hand to your ear*),

**This is what we do!** (*Motion for the children to follow you.*)

Lead the two children in walking around the room and patting others on the back. When you return to your original spot, say: **When we follow God, we're kind to others.** Then have each Follower give his or her *rainbow glasses* to another child. Repeat the rhyme and have all four children follow you around the room. This list of motions will get you started in showing children ways to follow God.

- Fold hands in prayer (when we follow God, we talk to him in prayer).
- Whisper "Jesus loves you" to others (when we follow God, we tell others about Jesus).
- Give high fives (when we follow God, we encourage others).
- Pull others to a standing position (when we follow God, we help others).
- Hug yourself (when we follow God, we love God).

When everyone is following you, form a circle. Collect the *rainbow glasses*, and put them away and out of sight.

Ask: • **What was the most fun about following the leader?** (Seeing what you would ask us to do next; joining in to do fun things with the others.)

- **What was it like to wear the *rainbow glasses*?** (Weird; fun; silly.)

Say: **When you wore the *rainbow glasses*, you saw things a little differently! And when you followed with the others, you were doing things together. When we follow God, we act differently, and we do things together.**

Ask: • **How do we show we're following God?** (By being kind; by loving God; by helping others; by telling people about Jesus.)

- **Why does God want us to follow him?** (Because he loves us; because he wants us to be in heaven with him; to show that we love him.)

Say: ► ***God calls us to follow him.* Following God is a big, important job! Let's see if Pockets has heard about how important it is to follow God. Will you help me call her? Pockets! Pockets!**



◀ BIBLE POINT

## Closing

### ■ Pockets Follows

**SUPPLIES:** none

Bring out Pockets the Kangaroo, and go through the following puppet script. When you finish the script, put Pockets away and out of sight.



- Pockets:** Hi, everyone! I just learned how to play the greatest game in the whole world!
- Teacher:** Let me guess. Was it Checkers?
- Pockets:** Nope.
- Teacher:** Monopoly?
- Pockets:** Not even close!
- Teacher:** Tag?
- Pockets:** No, siree!
- Teacher:** I give up! What game is it?
- Pockets:** Follow the Leader! Do you know that game?
- Teacher:** Oh, of course! It's lots of fun, too. In fact, we've just been playing a different kind of Follow the Leader. Children, can you tell Pockets what we learned in our game? (*Have children tell the different ways they can show others they're following God.*) You see, Pockets, we've been hearing about a man named Saul. He didn't like Jesus' followers. In fact, he wanted to put them all in prison so they'd stop talking about Jesus.
- Pockets:** Wow! He sounds like a very bad man! Can you children tell me what happened to him? (*Have children tell Pockets what happened to Saul on the road to Damascus.*) So Saul, the bad man who didn't like Jesus' followers, turned his life around and followed Jesus? Wow!
- Teacher:** Saul learned that the most important thing we can do is to follow God. That's still true for us today. ► God calls us to follow him, too.
- Pockets:** That gives me an idea for an even greater game! Instead of regular Follow the Leader, I'm going to play Following God! I'll start by helping my mom and singing a Bible song and learning all about Jesus and...
- Teacher:** Sounds like you've got a lot of following to do!
- Pockets:** I'd better get busy! See you next week!

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## Fun Following

SUPPLIES: CD player



Say: It sounds like Pockets really learned that ► *God calls us to follow him*. God gives us instructions for how to follow him in the Bible. And this week we have a new Bible verse. It comes from John 11:25a. Jesus said, ► “I am the resurrection and the life.” We follow God as we believe in Jesus, who died and rose again for our sins. Let’s learn a song to remind us of God’s call during the week. Teach children “God Calls Us” (track 15) to the tune of “Old MacDonald Had a Farm.” As you sing along with the CD, lead children in marching around the room, follow-the-leader style.



### SING

God calls us to follow him  
Every single day!  
God calls us to follow him;  
He’ll lead us all the way.

Follow God!  
He loves you, too!  
Do just what he says to do.

God calls us to follow him  
Every single day!

God calls us to obey him  
Every single day!  
God calls us to obey him;  
He’ll lead us all the way.

Obey God!  
He loves you, too!  
Do just what he says to do.

God calls us to obey him  
Every single day!

Say: Turn to a friend and tell him or her one way you’ll follow God this week. Pause while children share. Then pray: **Dear God, help us to listen to you and follow you. Teach us how important it is to follow when you call us. In Jesus’ name, amen.**



### Growing closer to Jesus extends beyond the classroom.

Photocopy the “Today I Learned...” handout (at the end of this lesson) for this week, and send it home with your children. Encourage parents to use the handout to plan meaningful family activities to reinforce this week’s topic.



◀ BIBLE VERSE



## For Extra Time

If you have a long class time or want to add additional elements to your lesson, try one of the following activities.

### ■ *Lively Learning: Blind Faith*



Form two teams and have each team line up in pairs at one end of the room. Place a chair opposite each team at the other end of the room. Have partners stand back to back and link elbows. Instruct the “sighted” children—the ones facing forward—to lead their partners across the room to the chairs. Upon reaching the chair, the other child will become “sighted” and must lead the partner back to the start. Continue until every pair has had a turn. Talk about how it feels to trust the “leader.” Explain that we can trust God to lead us through life.

### ■ *Make to Take: A Heart to Follow*

Collect old maps and atlases, and laminate them by sandwiching them between sheets of clear contact paper. Cut out a 4-inch heart for each child. Distribute the hearts in class, and explain that because Saul chose to follow God’s call, he traveled all over the world telling people about Jesus. Have each child use a hole punch to make a hole in the top of his or her heart and then string a length of yarn through it to make a necklace. Tell children that when we follow God, he may lead us to exciting places.

### ■ *Treat to Eat: Following Footprint Crackers*

Have children spread cream cheese on graham crackers and then place raisin “footprints” on the cream cheese (or use frosting and chocolate chips). Have children form pairs, point to the raisins, and tell their partners one way they’ll follow God for each raisin. Children may mention things such as praising God with songs, talking to God, thanking God, obeying parents, doing chores cheerfully, and giving generously.



### ■ *Story Picture: The Road to Damascus*

Give each child a copy of the “Today I Learned...” handout. Set out yellow chalk and crayons or markers. Let the children use the chalk to color the bright light then color the rest of the picture. Remind children of how God called Saul to follow him.

# Today I learned...

God calls us  
to follow him.

Today your child learned that God calls us to follow him. Children heard how Jesus met Saul on the road to Damascus. They talked about ways they can follow God each day.

## Verse to Learn

"I am the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25a).

## Ask Me...

- What happened to Saul on the road to Damascus?
- What does God call you to do?
- How can our family follow God this week?

## Family Fun

- Play Follow The Leader by doing things that please God such as cheerfully putting toys away, singing a praise song, shouting praises to God or saying a verse together.
- Hide a Bible in your home. Bookmark 1 John 5:3a with the end of a ball of yarn, and then run the yarn all over the house. Give your child the end of the yarn, and have him or her roll the yarn, following it to the Bible. Read the verse and talk about how we can follow God.

## The Road to Damascus (Acts 9:1-9)



