

## SAUL'S CONVERSION (Script)

### Scripture:

Acts 9:1-31

### Materials Needed:

Sheet for "robe" outfit/head covering

### Memory Verse:

*2 Corinthians 5:17 If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away, behold, the new has come.*

### Objectives: As a result of this lesson, I want my students

To Know—Although Saul's plan was to advance in Judaism under the best rabbis in Jerusalem, God's plan for him was to be a servant of Jesus, and share about Him to Jews and Gentiles, even though it would cause great suffering.

To Realize—Although one may have great plans for themselves, God's plan is that they become a servant of Jesus Christ, no matter what that might involve.

To Respond by—obeying God's plan for them.

### Before the Lesson:

Sing—*We Must Not Forget God's Word*

### Setting up the Story

Today, I've asked a special visitor to share with us today some amazing things that happened to him. (While getting into costume, have helper review books of the Bible).

### Telling the story (dressed as Saul):

I. My plan for me

A. Early life.

Thank you for letting me come and speak to you today. My name is Saul of Tarsus. My parents named me after the first king of Israel—he was very tall, and he lived about 1,000 years before I was born, but that is how I got my name. Later on, my name was changed to Paul, but that is another story!

I grew up in a Jewish home learning about Moses and God's laws. I memorized most of the first five books of the Bible at a young age. My parents realized that I had a very good mind, and they wanted me to study under the best Jewish teacher in Jerusalem. I had a plan to be the VERY BEST student and then the VERY BEST teacher of our traditions and customs! **...but that was not God's plan for me!**

B. Training in Jerusalem

When I was a teenager, I moved from Tarsus, which was near the Mediterranean Sea, to go live in Jerusalem and study the Jewish teachings about the Law of Moses. I already knew three languages and was at the top of my class. I was very smart and very proud of that. I was going to be the BEST Jewish teacher one day...**but that was not God's plan for me!**

### C. Stoning of Stephen

#### 1. Message about Jesus spreads.

I went to a very strict synagogue every Sabbath—that's kind of like your church. In Jerusalem, there were these men from Galilee (that's from the north part of Israel and we didn't think they were as smart as we were!)—they were saying that our Messiah-Savior had already come, and that His name was JESUS! This one Galilean named Peter was saying that Jesus was the Son of God and He died for our sins. They even said this Jesus had come back to life again, and they had seen Him alive and that they had seen Him go up into heaven!

My teachers were the religious leaders who had helped get Jesus put to death. They fought against Jesus! Guess what? I hated this Jesus, too. I thought that what His followers said about Him was untrue. I didn't know that I was the one who was untrue.

#### 2. Stephen shares about Jesus

One time, there was a follower of this Jesus named Stephen. God was doing miracles through him, and we were all so mad that he was talking about Jesus. We started arguing with Stephen, and I couldn't believe how he was speaking so powerfully! He wasn't as smart and educated as I was, but he was speaking more powerfully than I could. My teachers found men who lied about Stephen and said he had blasphemed against Moses and even God. They put him on trial, but he didn't even have a lawyer. He spoke to us about Moses, and God's law, and guess who? JESUS! He told us that even though we had God's commands from Moses, we weren't keeping them. We couldn't bear to hear any more.

#### 3. Saul holds coats as Stephen is stoned.

Everyone rushed at Stephen and dragged him outside the city walls. They took off their fancy outer coats and guess who they had hold them? ME! I was there that day! They picked up stones and started throwing them at Stephen. He fell to the ground and said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. Don't hold this against them." His face was filled with forgiveness as my teachers threw the large rocks, until finally Stephen did not move. He was dead. Even though I was not throwing the rocks, I was in agreement as they were being thrown. "Yes! Yes!" Here I was, studying God's laws, and I was filled with hate and murder in my heart.

#### 4. Saul plans to persecute followers of Jesus.

Right then I planned on getting rid of them! I got letters from my authorities to go to another big city called Damascus and find these Jesus followers and bring them back to Jerusalem so we could kill them, too. ...but God had a different plan for me!

### II. God's Plan for me

#### A. On road to Damascus

I was on the way to Damascus with some of my traveling companions and just as we were almost at the city, suddenly a very bright light surrounded me! I dropped to the ground and heard a voice say, "SAUL! SAUL! Why are you persecuting Me?" I said, "Lord, who are you?!" He said, "I AM JESUS, whom you are persecuting. Get up and go into the city, and it will be told you what to do." The men who were with me heard the voice, too, but they didn't see anyone. **I knew I must obey what Jesus told me to do.**

I got up (wave hand in front of eyes) and I couldn't see—I was completely blind! The bright light had blinded me.

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### B. In the city of Damascus

They led me into the city and I stayed at a house on a street called Straight! For three days I didn't eat or drink. I sat in darkness and prayed. I saw a vision of a man named Ananias who was going to lay his hands on me to receive my sight. On the third day, there was a knock on the door. Guess who it was? Ananias! He was a follower of Jesus. The Lord Jesus had appeared to him and told him where I was staying. Of course, Ananias had heard all the terrible things I was doing to the followers of Jesus. He was scared to come! The Lord said, **“Go! For he is a chosen instrument of Mine! He will tell about Jesus to the Jews, and the non-Jews, and even before kings.”** When Ananias came to where I was, he said, “Brother Saul, Jesus sent me to you so you can regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” Immediately these scales fell from my eyes, and I could see again! I got up and was baptized as a follower of JESUS! I went into the synagogue and they asked me to speak. I was the smart teacher and they wanted to hear from me. Guess who I started talking about? JESUS! This was God's plan for me!

### III. I suffer for bearing the Name of Jesus

You can imagine how surprised everyone was! Isn't this the man who came here to put followers of Jesus in jail and drag them to Jerusalem?! Isn't this the man who hates this Jesus? Now he is believing in Him and talking about Him! Can you guess what they wanted to do to me? (kill me) Yes! The very thing I had come to do to the followers of Jesus, now they wanted to do to me! When Ananias had delivered God's message to me, he had told me that God said I would suffer greatly to bear the name of Jesus...and he was right! **This was part of God's plan for me.** The Jewish leaders guarded the city gate, just waiting for me to leave so they could grab me and kill me! My friends who were followers of Jesus got a big basket and put me inside. Then they lowered me over the city wall and I escaped. There were many other times that I suffered greatly for sharing about Jesus. I was beaten repeatedly. I was shipwrecked 3 times. I spent months in really terrible prisons where I often got cold. These were the worst conditions of life—but I shared about who Jesus was boldly! Ever since He met me on the road to Damascus, I was HIS SERVANT, and this was His plan for me.

### **Concluding the Story:**

Do you have a great plan for what you think you are going to do for with your life? Then you are just like I was! And I can tell you from personal experience that God's plan for you is that you know Jesus and become His servant—even if that is hard! He will give you everything you need to do His will, just like He helped me through all those hard times. God used me to speak HIS message to believers in Jesus. Look in your Bibles at Romans...I wrote that to the believers at Rome! Do you see the next books in your Bible? These are the letters I wrote to believers with the message that God wanted them to hear on how to be a follower of Jesus.

I must go now, but thank you for letting me share my story!

***Sing: We must Not Forget God's Word again***

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