

LESSON SEVEN

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES: Saul is Called

AIM:**TIME: 60 minutes**

General: 1] To introduce Saul [later to be called Paul] and tell the story of his conversion from persecutor of the Church to missionary.

2] To show that: God's call is an invitation, not an order; He shows us the way, one step at a time and gives us the strength to do what He asks.

Personal: [1] To help the students to realize that God calls each of them to be His 'missionary'.

[2] To lead them to respond to this call and to look out for ways and means to share the 'Good News' in their daily lives.

Text used: Acts 9:1 - 31

I. STARTER: [15 minutes] Mini Treasure Hunt

I have an invitation for you, if you would like to go on a Mini Treasure Hunt. All those who would like to try, put up your hands.

(This session should be conducted outside the classroom and at a short distance from it. Before the class begins, place enough prizes (something flat, like bookmarks or stickers) for each group under a book on your table. Ask 6 students to stand at a distance from each other outside holding the Bible reference OR stick them at different locations. Divide the class into groups so that every group has a Good News Bible. A New Testament will do. Explain the game as follows:)

1. If you want to find the treasure, some of you should go and copy down the clues from the students who are standing around.
2. These clues are Bible references. Copy the clues in the right order and bring them back to your group.
3. One or two students should sit in one place and look up the clues in the Bible. Each clue will give you 1 or 2 words. All the words together will tell you where the treasure is.
4. When you know the place, go together and get your treasure. Then go and sit in class till the others finish.

- Lets go through the 3 stages of the game we just played. What happened first? *[As the students give their points write on the Black-board:]*

1. I invited you and you responded with a 'yes'.
2. I gave you instructions and clues to guide you.
3. You succeeded and found something.

Today we will read about someone from Acts who had a similar experience. He too was called and responded to the call. He was given instructions and help and finally he discovered, not just a holy picture, but a new life! Lets read about him...*(Who? Saul, who was later called Paul.)*

II. DEVELOPMENT: [35 minutes]

[Give out the handouts and allow the students to work in pairs or groups, depending on the number of Bibles available. They should read the story of Saul's conversion and fill in the words. After they have done this, go over their answers and add:]

1. Saul was going into Damascus to arrest Christians, not join them. Did Jesus invite Saul or was he forced to change his ways?

[The words- 'Why do you persecute me?' show that Jesus was appealing to him...he was free to reject him if he wished to.]

2. Is there any sign to show that Saul's response was- 'Yes'?

[Saul used the word 'Lord!' This showed that he was ready to obey him. When you call anyone 'Lord' it means you accept him as master.]

3. Did Jesus leave Saul to figure out what to do, or did He guide him? You received the Bible verses to help you. What help did Saul get?

[Jesus told Saul to go into the city and wait. Then he sent Ananias who baptised him. Saul received the Holy Spirit.]

4. Just as you discovered the treasure, what would you say Saul discovered?

[Saul realised that he was on the wrong track...he found a new way of life, a new set of friends, and a new mission in life...most important of all, he discovered Jesus]

- As we look at Saul's story, we realise that this is the story of countless people all over the world and right down history. God calls each one and gives us a vocation- [Write on VOCATION black-board]

- What does this mean? *Vocation means a call to live and work for Him.* Jesus becomes my Lord. It does not have to mean becoming a priest or nun. For each one, the call is different.

- What are the different VOCATIONS that people may be called to?

[Being a mother, a father, a teacher, a scientist, a businessman.]

. Whatever your vocation is, God wants you to be his missionary. He wants you to give his Good News to others. He wants you to bring His love to others and to bring them close to Him. [See CCC 341]

- What are the ways in which you or I can be a missionary?

By praying with someone who is in trouble; by visiting a lonely person; by speaking to somebody about Jesus; by forgiving someone who has hurt you; by helping someone who needs your help; by bringing someone to Church or for a prayer meeting; by sharing what you have with others.

- Can you think of any time that you have been a missionary? Write it in your handout and then we can share it with each other.

[After the students have shared, ask someone to tell the story of his own personal call and vocation, sharing how he heard God's voice, responded and then experienced His help and guidance]

III. PRAYER: [10 minutes]

Let us listen intently and hear what God is saying to us. At this present stage in my life he has a job for me to do. He will not leave me alone to do it, but will give me strength and guidance. He will show me the way, one step at a time. Like Saul, my eyes will open to new and exciting things. Am I ready to say, "Yes, I accept you as Lord. I am ready to be your missionary."?

[Allow the students to be silent for about 3 minutes and listen to Jesus' call. Then let them silently write a personal reply to Jesus.]

End with the Song: 'I'll Say Yes, Yes, Yes' OR 'Here I am, Lord'.

YOU WILL NEED:

One handout per student; Slips and prizes for Hunt; Good News Bibles.
CONTACT SOMEONE TO GIVE HIS/HER TESTIMONY- A PRIEST, SISTER, LAY MISSIONARY OR
ORDINARY LAY PERSON. MAKE SURE THE SHARING DOES NOT EXCEED 7-10 MINUTES.

CUT OUT THESE SLIPS [OR PHOTOCOPY THEM AND THEN CUT THEM]
GIVE THEM TO THE VOLUNTEERS/ PUT THEM UP AT DIFFERENT PLACES.

1. Luke 9:38 (11th word)

2. Matthew 8:9 (6th and 7th words)

3. Revelation 1:1 (2nd word)

4. John 1:32 (Second-last word)

5. Mark 3:35 (The word that appears 3 times)

6. Luke 22:14 (11th word)