

TRANSFORMED

By Janelle Clendenon 2025

Story: Saul's Conversion – Acts 9 and parts of Acts 7

Parts

Pathfinders: Narrator 1 Narrator 2 Narrator 3 (more dramatic)

Adventurers speaking parts: Saul/Paul Believer 1 Believer 2

 Ananias Believer 3 Believer 4

Adventurers non-speaking action: Guard(s)

Narrator 1: Another example of transformation comes from the book of Acts. It is the story of Saul, who we know as Paul.

Narrator 2: Our story begins after Jesus' death and resurrection; Jesus came to His disciples and demonstrated that He was alive; then He ascended to Heaven.

Narrator 3: (*dramatically*) OK So then the Holy Spirit came. And more and more people believed in Jesus – like thousands and thousands of people!

Narrator 1: Right! They were called the first church. They helped each other and shared everything with each other. They even sold property so others could have food and homes.

Narrator 3: (*dramatically*) And more and more people believed in Jesus – like thousands and thousands of people!

Narrator 2: (*emphatically*) Right! And the apostles did amazing miracles in Jesus' name.

Narrator 1: ...and got put in prison. Then had to, or got to, talk to the temple authorities who told the apostles to stop talking about God.

Narrator 2: But the apostles said, 'We need to obey God. We will tell others about Jesus! The temple leaders were surprised at their boldness!

Narrator 3: (*dramatically*) And more and more people believed in Jesus – like thousands and thousands of people!

Narrator 1: So, let's just get to the story... It is the story of Saul, who we know as Paul.

Narrator 2: Right, but first you should know, Saul was there when Steven was stoned to death.

Narrator 3: *(dramatically)* Why is that important? Why was Stephen stoned? Who cares if Saul was there – Why is that important?

Narrator 2: Steven had been falsely accused. People made up lies about him. They convinced others to join them in stoning him. And Saul was there holding the coats of those throwing the stones. You see which side Saul was on.

Narrator 3: I see. Yikes! That's scary! Did Stephen run?

Narrator 2: No. He stood strong and tall. His face shone like the face of an angel. He talked about how God led the Israelites through-out time. He asked, 'Why are you resisting the Holy Spirit?' Then they threw stones at him! Stephen saw Jesus standing beside God. Jesus stood up for Stephen. Stephen said, 'Lord forgive them' and he died.

Narrator 3: Just like Jesus forgave those who crucified Him. So, did thousands more believe in Jesus?

Narrator 2: Well, persecution broke out. Many believers left Jerusalem and Israel. They did skedaddle! They spread out all over the world. They did continue to tell about how Jesus saves us from our sin. And many, many more, from all over the world did believe in Jesus.

Narrator 1: Wait! Now you're getting ahead of our story. Saul was part of that persecution. That is part of our story.

Narrator 3: *(dramatically)* Right! Enter Saul, guards, and believers!

(Believer 1, 3, and 4 come to front. Saul follows. Guards go stand beside jail)

Narrator 2: Remember that the believers had the Holy Spirit. They love, love, loved Jesus! So, they were bold and courageous and excited to tell others the Good News that Jesus saves us from our sin.

Saul/Paul: *(Goes to Adventurer Believer 1)* Do you believe in Jesus?

Believer 1: Yes! Jesus died for our sins. He saved me! Jesus loves you too.

Believer 3&4: *(together)* If you confess your sins, He is faithful and just to forgive your sins and to cleanse you from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)

(Believer 3 & 4 go back and sit down)

Saul/Paul: You! Come with me! *(Points to Believer 1 and takes Believer 1 to jail)*

Guard: *(Standing by door. Opens door and guides Believer into jail.) (Then believer goes sits down in pew.)*

Narrator 3: They were being persecuted: They were put in jail just because they believed in Jesus?! That's crazy! I would skedaddle, leave, get out of there!

(Believer 2 comes up front)

Narrator 1: Saul continued to arrest believers and put them in jail. Many were killed.

Saul/Paul: *(to Believer 2)* Do you believe in Jesus?

Believer 2: Yes! Jesus died and rose again! I'm so happy I will live eternally with Him. Jesus loves you too! You too can have eternal life! Believe in Jesus.

Saul/Paul: Come with me! *(Takes Believer 1 to jail then stands off to side near jail)*

Guard: *(Standing by door. Opens door and guides Believer into jail.) (Then believer goes sits down in pew.)*

Narrator 1: At this time, this church was called The Way. Like you said earlier, many of the believers scattered because of the persecution. They continued to preach the Good News and Word of God wherever they went.

Narrator 2: Saul went to the high priest ² and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem.

Narrator 3: Wait! Damascus was a long ways away! It's past the Sea Galilee and that's 81 miles from Jerusalem! Damascus is in Syria, 150 miles North of Jerusalem!

(Saul and guards walk up to front stage)

Narrator 1: True, but it gets crazier. ³As Saul neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. ⁴He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him,

Saul/Paul: *(falls to ground)*

Voice: "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?"

Saul/Paul: Who are you Lord?

Voice: "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. ⁶"Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

Narrator 2: ⁷The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone. ⁸Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So, they led him by the hand into Damascus.

Saul/Paul: *(Gropes around and hold onto shoulder of companion. They walk together off stage opposite of jail and sit down for a bit.)*

Narrator 3: He was blinded! Wait! In a way, Saul was already blind because he didn't really get [understand] who Jesus was.

(Ananias ready to come up front)

Narrator 2: You're right. ⁹For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything. Meanwhile, ¹⁰In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision,

(Ananias comes up front)

Voice: "Ananias!"

Ananias: "Yes, Lord."

Voice: "Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying. ¹²In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight."

Ananias: Are you sure Lord?

Narrator 3: ¹³"Lord," Ananias answered, "I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your holy people in Jerusalem. ¹⁴And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name." ¹⁵But the Lord said to Ananias,

Voice: "Go! This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel. ¹⁶I will show him how much he must suffer for my name."

Ananias: *(Ananias walks off stage left. Saul walks up to front stage and lays on a cot or blanket. Then Ananias comes up on stage while narrator says:)*

Narrator 3: ¹⁷Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord—Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here—has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." ¹⁸Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see

again. He got up and was baptized, ¹⁹ and after taking some food, he regained his strength.

Narrator 2: Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus. ²⁰ At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God.

(Saul stands center stage)

Saul/Paul: Believe in Jesus. He is God's Son, our Savior.

Believer 3&4: *(Pretend to be talking to each other and point at Saul while narrator says...)*
He sounds like a believer. What happened?

Narrator 1: "Isn't he the man who raised havoc in Jerusalem among those who call on this name? And hasn't he come here to take them as prisoners to the chief priests?"

²² Yet Saul grew more and more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Messiah.

Narrator 2: Now Saul saw that Jesus and God were unified as one. So, Saul no longer was against Jesus. He was for Jesus! He taught many people about the Good News that Jesus is our Savior – Jesus saves us from our sins and gives us eternal life!

Narrator 3: *(dramatically)* And more and more people believed in Jesus – like thousands and thousands of people!

Narrator 1: Saul had been transformed! He was like a new person – a new creation! Even his name was changed. Now people called him Paul.

Narrator 2: Saul, whose name was changed to Paul, calls us believers who are being transformed, a new creation. Instead of going against God, making bad choices, and following the ways of the Devil, we choose to follow God's way. God's Holy Spirit teaches us God's way. We love and respect God and keep the golden rule:

(Adventurers come up – Saul, guards, believers, Ananias, and any others)

Narrator 3: Paul wrote many books in the Bible that tell us the Good News, too! Paul wrote:

(Pathfinders join Adventurers up front to say the verses)

All: "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. ..." (Romans 12:2a)

Narrator 1: So, like Paul, we choose to follow God's way. We let God, through the Holy Spirit work in us and renew our mind.

Narrator 2: Renew our mind? So that would be what we think about?

Narrator 3: Right! Like Paul also wrote:

All: Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things. (Philippians 4:8)

All: The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. (Galatians 5:22-23)