

WHO...Investigate the Characters

WHERE...Investigate the location

WHEN...Investigate the time

I nvestigate the Facts of the Lesson

Investigating the facts of Scripture confirms the truth in our hearts.

1. Who are the primary characters in this passage and where does the story take place? The Apostle Paul is imprisoned in Caesarea, awaiting transfer to Rome to plead his case before the Emperor. King Agrippa is visiting the Roman Governor, Porcius Festus.

2. Read Acts 26:16-18.

a. List as many specific commands from Jesus as possible.

Get up, stand on your feet, be a minister and a witness, be used by Christ to open their eyes, turn them from darkness to light, and from the dominion of Satan to God.

b. List the promises Jesus made.

I will reveal things to you, I will rescue you, the people will receive forgiveness of sins, receive an inheritance, and be sanctified by faith in Christ.

3. Looking back across his life, Paul was able to say, “So, King Agrippa, I did not prove disobedient to the heavenly vision” (Acts 26:19). Would you characterize this as an accurate assessment of Paul’s life? If so, why?

Briefly review Paul’s journey of faith.

F ind the purpose of the lesson

WHY...Find the intent

WHAT...Find the meaning

WHEREAS...Find the Significance

God always works with a purpose.

1. Christ’s words in Acts 26:16-18 represent far more than Christ’s call upon one man’s life. They communicate the divine purpose for His church. Fulfilling His purpose begins with obedience: ““But get up and stand on your feet”” (v.16). Compare Christ’s words to Paul with God’s call to the prophet Ezekiel in Ezekiel 2:1-3. Why is it necessary for such a command to accompany God’s call?

Possible answers: Feelings of inadequacy, fear, discouragement, depression. Ask your LifeGroup if they have ever experienced a time when they felt unsure of their calling, but God assured them it was time for them to “get up and stand to your feet,” commanding and assuring them.

2. Christ’s purpose for our lives as believers is both general and specific. In a general sense, we all have the calling of Paul from the Lord: ““For this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a minister and a witness’” (v.16). How does this calling of Christ help us understand what it means for “the church to be the church”?

Ask your LifeGroup to discuss the importance of not only agreeing that God has appointed us to minister and witness, but also fulfilling that calling in a personal way.

3. Look carefully at Acts 26:18. What a clear statement of purpose for the church! Examine and discuss each of the following phrases that Jesus said in this verse and apply it in three ways: to Paul’s life, to every believer’s life, and to the mission of the church.

- “To open their eyes” (Reference: Luke 18:41-43)
- “Turn from darkness to light” (Reference: John 8:12)
- “(Turn) from the dominion of Satan to God” (Reference: Ephesians 6:10-13)
- “Receive forgiveness of sins” (Reference: Mark 2:8-11)
- “(Receive) an inheritance” (Reference: John 14:1-4)
- “Sanctified by faith in Me” (Reference: Galatians 2:20)

4. As Paul stood before King Agrippa and shared his testimony, he was fulfilling the very purpose that Jesus gave to him on the Damascus Road.

a. Look carefully at what Paul said in verse 20. What were the three actions that Paul was supposed to call people to do in coming to Christ?

Repent of sins, turn to God, and perform works that evidence a changed life

b. Is it possible to fulfill God's purposes without repentance? Without turning to God? Without doing God's work?

As your LifeGroup discusses the importance of each action of faith, ask your LifeGroup if any of these messages (repent of your sins, turn to God, do God's work) are becoming "unpopular" among churches today, and if so, why?

Experience the knowledge

Experience the change

Experience the joy

Experience the Truth of the Lesson

Experiencing the truth of God's Word equips church members to be the church.

Becoming "a minister and a witness" brings great joy to the lives of believers. Share a story of a moment of great joy you experienced while giving witness to your faith in Christ or while serving others.

Be prepared to share a story from your life.

2. Compare and contrast a lifestyle of living in darkness under the dominion of Satan with a lifestyle of experiencing light while living under the authority of the Lord. Who do you know personally who needs their eyes opened, turning them from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God? Would you be willing to invite them to join us for our ONE LifeGroup of 1000 on March 4?

Possible comparisons of a life of darkness and a life in Christ's light: lies vs. truth, drunkenness vs. being Spirit-filled, being alone vs. being a child of God, dismay vs. joy, fear vs. faith, hopelessness vs. promise.

3. As part of the divine purpose for the church, every believer should seek to live out these words of the Apostle Paul. Fortunately, this is not a unique message from one individual in the New Testament. Read 1 Peter 1:3-9. Listen to discover as many parallels as possible between the words of Peter and the words of Paul.

Encourage your LifeGroup to examine how these passages can inspire them to "get up and stand on your feet" (v. 19).

4. Every believer will one day stand in judgment before King Jesus. Reflect on the words of the Apostle Paul, "So, King... I did not prove disobedient to the heavenly vision." How faithful have you been to be a minister and a witness? Close by praying for the LifeGroup to fulfill Christ's divine purpose for His church.

Encourage your LifeGroup to invest time in reflecting, praying, and going, always remembering that going is important to God.

Truth Points

Dominion (v. 18)— Under the power or authority of another.

Sanctified (v. 18)—Being set apart for sacred or holy purposes.

Repentance (v. 20)—Turning from sin and self and turning to God through faith in Jesus Christ.