



God's Grace Poured Out

(based on Acts 9:1-22; 1 Timothy 1:12-14)

Many years ago, just after the time of Jesus, there lived a man named Saul. Saul did not like Christians and tried to stop them from spreading the good news of Jesus. One day Saul got permission to go to the city of Damascus (duh-MAS-kuhs) to arrest the followers of Jesus and throw them all in jail.

On the way to Damascus, something amazing happened. Jesus appeared to Saul in a blinding light and talked about the things Saul was doing. Afterward, Saul could not see. Some people helped him get to Damascus and for three days he could not see.

Ananias (an-uh-NAI-uhs) was a man who lived in the city of Damascus. Jesus came to Ananias in a dream and told him to pray with Saul. Ananias did not want to go. After all, Saul had come to Damascus to arrest the Christians. Jesus told Ananias to go and pray with Saul anyway.

“I have chosen Saul for a special job,” Jesus explained.

Ananias went to see Saul to pray with him. As they prayed, God's grace was poured out on Saul and his eyes were healed. He could see again.

Saul became a leader in the church. He traveled to many places with the good news of Jesus.

Saul's life was completely changed by God's love. The changes were so big that Saul started using his Roman name, Paul.

Sometimes Paul would write to other people about what happened.

“I used to say terrible things about Jesus and I was cruel to his followers,” Paul would explain. “But Jesus forgave me because I didn't understand. God's grace was poured into my life and changed me completely. I am a new man. Praise be to God who lives forever.”



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Use one or more activities from each section to explore grace and gratitude with your children this week.

Recognizing God's Grace

- Read and enjoy the story with your children—imagine and wonder.
- Collect enough adult-sized shoes for Saul/Paul, Jesus, helpers, and Ananias. Ask each child to pick a pair of shoes and a character. As you reread the story, invite the children to play the part of their character, to pretend to walk around in their shoes. Ask the children to share how it felt to be their character. Ask: “How did God help the characters in the story?”
- God helped Paul and Ananias to see people in new ways and to work well with them. Invite your children to look at one another in different ways—with eyes closed, through a pin-sized hole in a piece of cardboard, through a paper tube, and with eyes wide open. Talk with your children about their experiences of seeing each other in different ways. Pray: “Dear God, help us look at people through your eyes and learn to work well together.”



Responding to God's Grace

- Invite your children to walk around the house, looking at everyday objects and imagining a different helpful purpose for each item. For example, imagine a lamp as a lighthouse, guiding ships to safety. Before the game ends, invite the children to look at family members and imagine them with new skills and jobs. Listen carefully to your children's thoughts about gifts and roles. Play as long as time and energy allow.
- Help your children to wonder about their unique God-given gifts. Once a day, invite your child to stand in front of a mirror and echo after you:

Mirror, mirror on the wall,
God is calling one and all.
What does God's call mean to me?
Help me watch and look and see.

Mirror, mirror on the wall,
God is using one and all.
What good gifts are mine to share?
To help the world with love and care.

Celebrating in Gratitude

- Invite people to celebrate by shouting, “Hooray, God!” every time they notice surprising ways people in the family are working well together.
- Pray this prayer this week:

Dear God, thank you for helping us imagine new ways to serve you and others with gratitude. Amen.