



BIBLE STUDY

Bible Study Scripture Theme: 2 Timothy 2:15

August 5, 2025

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The Book of Acts

**THEME: CAN I GET A WITNESS - THE GOSPEL TO THE
ENDS OF THE EARTH**

THEME SCRIPTURE: ACTS 1:8

***Lesson Topic: The Power of Personal Transformation: From
Adversity to Advocacy - The Impact of a Life-
Changing Encounter***

Lesson Scripture: Acts 26:12-23

***Purpose: To highlight Paul's transformation from a persecutor of Christians to a devoted
apostle, emphasizing the divine calling and mission given to him by Jesus.***

I. BACKGROUND

- a. ***When:*** The events of Acts 26 occur around 59 A.D.
- b. ***Characters:*** Paul, Agrippa, Festus, Bernice, Jesus, Moses and the Prophets
- c. ***Places:*** Jerusalem, Damascus, Judea

II. INTRODUCTION: PAUL'S PERMISSION TO SPEAK (26:1–3)

- King Agrippa grants Paul permission to speak.
- Paul expresses gratitude for the opportunity.
- Acknowledges Agrippa's familiarity with Jewish customs and controversies.

III. PAUL'S EARLY LIFE AND PERSECUTION OF CHRISTIANS (26:4–11)

- Paul summarizes his upbringing as a Pharisee.
- Emphasizes his zeal for Jewish traditions.
 - ✓ Paul would have been very familiar with the ***Old Testament Scriptures***, yet his biased reading of them led him to miss how they all ***Pointed*** to ***Jesus***.
- Hope is a key word, appearing three times in vv. 6-7

- Describes his intense persecution of Christians:

- ✓ He **Imprisoned** some
- ✓ **Voted** for their **Execution**
- ✓ **Forcing** them to **blaspheme**
- ✓ **Pursuing** them even to foreign cities

IV. **PAUL'S CONVERSION EXPERIENCE (26:12–23)**

A. Context– Paul's defense before King Agrippa,

B. Purpose – Recounting his conversion and mission

C. Paul's Journey to Damascus – V. 12

- Mission: Persecute Christians
- Authority: Commissioned by the Chief Priests

D. Vision of Jesus – VV. 13-15

- Bright Light
- Voice from Heaven
- Identification

E. Jesus's Commission to Paul – VV. 16-18

- Appointed as a Servant and Witness
- Mission: Open the eyes of the Gentiles
 - Turn them from D_____ to L_____
 - T_____ from S_____ to G_____
 - R_____ F_____

F. Paul's Obedience to the Vision – VV. 19-20

- Immediate Response:
 - Preached in D_____, J_____, J_____, and to the G_____.
- Message:
 - R_____, turning to God, and demonstrating R_____ through D_____.

G. Opposition and Divine Help – VV. 21-23

- Arrest: Jews seized Paul in the Temple Courts
- Divine Assistance: God helped Paul to continue his testimony
- Fulfillment of Prophecy: Preaching the suffering, resurrection, and light of the Messiah to both Jews and Gentiles

V. **PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS**

1. **Embrace Transformation** – Romans 12:1-2; Matthew 5-7; 1 Peter 3:15-16

Personal Change: Just as Paul experienced a dramatic transformation, we can be open to change in our own lives. Reflect on areas where you may need to turn away

from harmful behaviors or attitudes and embrace a new direction aligned with God's will.

Testimony: Share your personal story of transformation with others. Your experiences can inspire and encourage those who may be struggling with similar challenges.

- 2. Respond to God's Call** – Genesis 12:1-4; Exodus 3:1-10; 1 Samuel 3:1-10; Isaiah 6:1-8; Jeremiah 1:4-5; Luke 1:26-38; Matthew 4:18-22; Acts 9:1-19

Obedience: Be attentive to God's calling in your life. Whether it's a small prompting or a significant mission, respond with obedience and trust in God's plan.

Service: Look for opportunities to serve others and be a witness to God's love and grace. This can be through acts of kindness, volunteering, or simply being a supportive friend.

- 3. Repentance and Forgiveness** – Matthew 4:17; Acts 3:19, 17:30; 1 Corinthians 11:28; 1 John 1:9; 2 Chronicles 7:14; Ephesians 4:32; Matthew 6:14; Colossians 3:13; Luke 6:37

Self-Examination: Regularly examine your actions and attitudes. Acknowledge any wrongdoings and seek God's forgiveness. True repentance involves a sincere change of heart and behavior.

Forgive Others: Extend forgiveness to those who have wronged you. Just as we receive forgiveness from God, we are called to forgive others, fostering reconciliation and healing.

- 4. Persevere Through Challenges** - 2 Corinthians 11:23-28; Philippians 4:13; Hebrews 13:5; Matthew 19:26

Resilience: Draw strength from Paul's example of perseverance. When facing difficulties, rely on your faith and the support of your community to stay steadfast in your commitments.

Hope: Maintain hope and trust in God's provision, even in challenging times. Remember that God is with you and will help you overcome obstacles.

- 5. Share the Gospel** – Matthew 28:16-20; Acts 1:8

Evangelism: Take opportunities to share the message of Jesus with others. This can be through conversations, acts of service, or living out your faith in a way that draws others to Christ.

Inclusivity: Embrace the inclusive nature of the gospel. Reach out to people from different backgrounds and cultures, reflecting the universal message of God's love and salvation.

- 6. Live Out Your Faith** – James 2:14-26; 2 Timothy 4:7-8

Actions Reflect Beliefs: Demonstrate your faith through your actions. Let your deeds reflect your commitment to God and your desire to live a life that honors Him.

Community Involvement: Engage with your faith community. Participate in church activities, small groups, or service projects that allow you to grow spiritually and support others.

Three Accounts of Paul's Conversion and Commission in the Book of Acts

We find three accounts of Paul's conversion in the book of Acts—Acts 9:1–19a 22:1—and 26:9–23. Why? And what are the primary differences between them?

In answering *why*, if nothing else, Luke wrote under the inspiration of the Spirit, so we can conclude that Paul's conversion was important to God and that He wanted it to be remembered by His people. In keeping with the book of Acts, Acts 1:8 announced the spread of the witness to Christ and His resurrection to Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, and then to the ends of the earth. In taking the gospel beyond Samaria, Acts 9 records the history of Paul's conversion through the pen of Luke. Acts 22 presents Paul's conversion and commission from his own lips to the Jews, and Acts 26 does the same to the Gentiles in Caesarea. So, one might say Acts 9 introduces us to the primary apostle to the Gentiles and Acts 22 and 26 gives us his witness to this conversion and commission before the Jews and Gentiles in keeping with the theme of the spread of the gospel in Acts.

In discovering the differences among the three accounts, we might first notice that each account details Paul's encounter in Christ on the road to Damascus and his commission to be an apostle. Beyond that, what follows is a summary of the primary differences between these three accounts.

The difference in contexts was already noted. Acts 9 is a third-person account of Paul's commission, Acts 22 and 26 first-hand accounts from Paul, and that to Jews and then Gentiles.

Acts 9:1–19a brings out the hesitation of Ananias to see Paul, something the reader himself might have had (Acts 9:9–16). But, knowing that he, too, spoke to the Lord and accepted Paul would have built the anticipation that others would as well (e.g., Barnabas and the apostles; cf. Acts 9:26–30).

Acts 22:1–21 contains a number of choice details by Paul to connect with his Jewish audience. He gives his Jewish background (Acts 22:1–5) and focuses on Ananias's good reputation, God's revelation through him to Paul, and his miracle in curing Paul's blindness (Acts 22:12–16), as if to give a Jewish witness to his commission. Tying Jesus to the Jewish God of the Old Testament, Ananias describes Paul as called by the Father (God) to know His will and see and hear the Righteous One (i.e., the Messiah). Paul also recalled a second commission by Jesus in the temple, as if to say that God through Jesus called him to the Gentiles from the most important place in the Jewish nation.

Acts 26:9–23 leaves out Ananias and Paul's blindness altogether and summarizes Paul's commission in terms of Jesus alone. In recalling this commission, this account gives the most detail for the gospel that he was to preach (Acts 26:18–23), a necessity in light of his Gentile audience.

We can only thank God for Paul and his role in taking the gospel to the world. May our lives as Christians be as his—radically transformed by Jesus from walking in darkness to spread the light of the glorious gospel of Christ.