

Lesson 1 A Change In Identity

Use this outline to share the Biblical Truth with students. The underlined words correspond to the blanks on the Master Teacher Student Worksheet.

Outline

Intro: What about you makes you different from everyone else?

1. Before encountering Christ, Paul was an enemy of God (Acts 7:51–8:3).

2. Paul experienced transformation when he encountered Christ (Acts 9:1–9).

Use any of these activities you choose as you teach the outline to your students. The activities correspond to the points in the outline.

Activities

Description: Your identity is the sum total of all the elements that set you apart as an individual. Your characteristics, attributes, personality, beliefs, strengths, and weaknesses all make up your identity.

Illustration: Did you know that no two people have ever been found to have the same fingerprints? Researchers say that the probability of you and another person sharing the same fingerprints is about 1 in 64 billion. The uniqueness of fingerprints and the fact that they don't change as we age make them a foolproof form of identification. In fact, there is a whole branch of science devoted to the study and use of fingerprints called biometrics. For more information, visit <http://science.howstuffworks.com/fingerprinting1.htm>.

Description: Before he was Paul, Saul the Pharisee was the chief persecutor of the Church. Paul angrily opposed Jews who claimed Jesus was the Son of God, the promised Messiah sent to deliver Israel. Paul violently persecuted the young Church.

Illustration: One of the most well know stories of bitter enemies is the Hatfield and McCoy feud. The feud between these families intensified after one family was accused of stealing a hog from the other. This resulted in hostilities between the two clans that resulted in deaths on both sides and a court case that went all the way to the Supreme Court. The families weren't reconciled to one another for several generations.

For more information, visit <http://www.history.com/shows/hatfields-and-mccoys/articles/the-hatfield-mccoy-feud>

Interaction: Ask if any students are friends with people they used to not get along with. Ask a volunteer to describe how he or she became friends with a former "enemy." Explain that we often act a certain way because we believe one thing to be true about someone or something. Then, we find out the truth and change our attitudes.

Description: Paul's dramatic encounter with Jesus forced him to face the Truth. When confronted by the risen Lord, Paul realized Christ was indeed the Son of God.

Illustration: Hydroelectric power is generated from water held by a

dam. When the water is released, it spins the blades of a giant turbine. The turbine connects to a generator that makes electricity. The water's potential is harnessed for powerful purposes. Paul was the same way, except that Jesus captured Paul's potential.

Interaction: Explain that a defining moment is a moment that changes everything. Direct students to the Student Worksheet activity "A Defining Moment." If you have purchased the *Becoming* Student Books, direct students to page 5. Instruct students to complete the activity. (Book Only Answers: 1—C; 2—E; 3—D; 4—A; 5—B or PDF Only Answers: 1—C; 2—D; 3—B; 4—E; 5—A.) Tell students to think of a defining moment in their lives. Ask a volunteer to describe the impact that moment made on him or her.

Application: The lives of Christians should be decidedly different from the lives of those around them. Knowing Jesus should produce a difference the world can easily recognize.

3. After encountering Christ, Paul became a messenger of God's grace (Acts 9:10–16).

Description: God had big plans for Paul. No longer would Saul the Pharisee arrest and imprison Christians. Paul the Apostle would take Jesus' message of love and redemption to the Gentile world.

Illustration: Mosab Hassan Yousef is a Palestinian whose father was one of the founders of the terrorist organization Hamas. His radical Muslim upbringing made him an enemy to all things Jewish and Christianity. In his early twenties, however, Yousef came under the influence of a British missionary who introduced him to Jesus Christ. Yousef eventually accepted Christ and was secretly baptized. For fear of his life, Yousef refrained from revealing his faith publicly but eventually began to tell others his story. The account of his life can be found in his autobiography, *Son of Hamas: A Gripping Account of Terror, Betrayal, Political Intrigue, and Unthinkable Choices*.

Interaction: Ask students to think of a time when they or someone else shared the message of God's grace. Ask a few volunteers to describe the circumstances and results. Ask how it made them feel.

Application: Every Christian has a role to play in God's plan to draw humankind back to Himself. God can and will use you to be a messenger of His love and grace, just like He used Paul.

Conclusion: When people encounter Christ, they are forever changed.

Description: Recognizing Jesus as the true Son of God is a life-transforming experience. The very nature of a believer's identity is radically changed. The process of becoming more like Christ begins.

Application: If students have given Jesus control of their lives, they will live in a way that communicates this truth. Their old way of life is gone. A new way of life has begun, and Christ sets the course. Students' identity should fade, and Christ's identity in them should grow stronger and stronger.