

“But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. He told them how Saul on his journey had seen the Lord and that the Lord had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had preached fearlessly in the name of Jesus. So Saul stayed with them and moved about freely in Jerusalem, speaking boldly in the name of the Lord.”

Acts 9:27,28

1. Barnabas (meaning ‘Son of Encouragement’) became an advocate for Saul. His key point about Saul was that he ‘had seen the Lord’
2. Barnabas then went on to describe Saul’s actions
3. This relationship continued for many years
4. Do you think it sensible for a mature Christian to be linked up with a young Christian? Who would you choose to be linked with?
5. If you became such an advocate what would you want to teach the young Christian?
6. Saul was allowed and encouraged to ‘work for God’ right from the beginning
7. Where do you think that you might become active for God?

DISCOVERING THE BIBLE

LESSON 49

HOW WE SUPPORT EACH OTHER—A CASE STUDY

“Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest 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.”

Acts 9:1

1. Saul’s job was to persecute Christians

“As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?” “Who are you, Lord?” Saul asked. “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,” he replied. “Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.”

Acts 9:3-6

1. Paul saw Jesus and heard ‘The Lord’ confront him with his sin
2. Jesus told Saul (who was made blind by the light) to go into the city—and Saul obeyed
3. Do you think Jesus was too soft on Saul?

"The Lord told him, "Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying. In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight." "Lord," Ananias answered, "I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your saints in Jerusalem."

Acts 9:11-13

1. Ananias was to meet Saul and heal him by laying hands on him
2. Ananias is very wary. He probably feels in danger
3. Do you think Ananias would need a forgiving attitude to Saul?

"Then 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."

Acts 9:17

1. Ananias obeys God's command—and addresses Saul as his brother
2. The healing is given by the laying on of hands
3. An added component is that the command includes Saul being filled with the Holy Spirit

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

Acts 9:19,20

1. Saul fits in with the disciples in Damascus
2. Saul immediately begins to announce that he now believes Jesus is the Son of God
3. We are not all going to preach—but do you think that it is important to announce your faith and see a change in your life?

"After many days had gone by, the Jews conspired to kill him, But his followers took him by night and lowered him in a basket through an opening in the wall. When he came to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he really was a disciple."

Acts 9:23-26

1. Could you understand why the disciples were afraid of Saul still?
2. How do you think the disciples might treat Saul?
3. What would you like to happen to Saul to help him fit in?