

## Trusting in God by Shae Miller

### FAITH STORY:

Acts 9: 1-19

### FAITH FOCUS:

In Acts 9, Saul goes through a major transformation, becoming Paul as a result of his dramatic conversion experience. Throughout the story, there are different ways of trusting in God and realizing that God can bring peace to us when we are afraid or worried. Whether it's Saul's fears because he has no sight while traveling to a new town, or Ananias' questions as he travels to restore Saul's sight, God helps to calm both Ananias' and Paul's fears of what will happen in the future.

### MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION:

- Bibles
- Two blindfolds
- Pens and new small notebooks—one for each student
- Chalk board, dry erase board or flip chart and markers

### SESSION OUTLINE

#### FOCUS:

Have a seating arrangement set up in a circle, and encourage the youth to sit down next to someone they don't usually sit next to. Greet them all, then invite them to share one "happy" and one "crappy" part of their week. Give an example by sharing your own "happy-crappy."

#### CONNECT:

While preparing for the lesson, think of two youth who would be willing to participate in a game, even if they were unsure of what it was. Also pick two youth whom you could trust to physically hold someone up.

Ask the two youth you've chosen to play the game to leave the room. While they are gone, blindfold them.

While the two blindfolded kids are outside, explain to the “trustworthy” youth what their job is. Explain that the two youth outside are blindfolded and have no idea what’s going on. Explain that the game is just like the “Trust Game” except the kids falling back have blindfolds on, and don’t know that the youth are behind to catch them. Explain to the rest of the group that they must be completely still during the game.

Bring the blindfolded youth back into the room and lead them so they are directly behind the two catchers, about 1’-1.5’ Then tell the blindfolded kids to “Fall backwards.” After noticing resistance and uneasiness, say it again. Keep saying things like, “Just fall back,” or “It’s alright. Trust me,” until they are confident enough that it’s okay. However, do not tell them that there are people behind them to catch them when they fall. Just make sure they know that it is safe if they decide to fall back.

After a few times of the youth realizing that it’s safe to fall back, have them take off their blindfolds.

Ask them:

- How did it make you feel when the blindfold was put on you, and no one told you what was happening?
- Why didn’t you just trust me and fall backwards?
- What finally helped you to do it?

*Say: Our Bible story today is about trusting in someone even though they didn’t know what was going to happen.*

## **EXPLORE THE BIBLE**

Ask students to turn in their Bibles to Acts 9: 1-19. Take turns reading. After the story is over, ask: *“What’s the connection between the Trust Game we played and this story?”*

Discuss:

- How would it feel to be instantly blind, and then to be led along a road into a city?
- What do you think Saul thought was happening to him and why?
- What do you think Ananias thought when he was told in a dream to go see Saul?
- Why do you think Ananias went? Wasn’t he afraid of Saul?
- Who was trusting whom in these stories?

## APPLY

Have the youth split into groups and discuss these questions that you've written on the chalk board, dry erase board or newsprint:

- How often do you trust God throughout your week?
- What are some examples of when you trust God?
- What are some examples of when you could put your trust in God but you don't?

Bring the groups back together and have each group share their answers. Then go around the group again, recalling the "happy/crappy" answer they shared earlier. Discuss how trusting God could fit into those situations.

Finally, discuss how our actions fit into trusting God. What is the balance between "just trusting God" and "doing our part"? For example, I will "just trust God" to help me get the money for college, versus I will worry about it and work hard to find the money. Should I put money into car payments and trust God for the college money? What are other examples? How do we trust God and do our part?

Conclude this section by saying: *"We may not be blinded by a light or get a vision, but we all have many times in our lives when we need to trust God. So ... for the next week, let's see what that could mean."*

## RESPOND

Hand out small notebooks to each youth. Encourage them to take the notebooks with them for the next week, and to look for things throughout the day in which they could or did trust God. Record those things, along with their feelings. Was it easy or hard to trust God in the different situations? Tell them to pray each night for more opportunities the next day to trust and grow in God.

Close with prayer.

## INSIGHTS FROM SCRIPTURE

Many people feared Saul. He hated Christians so much that he went from town to town killing people for no other reason than because they were believers of Jesus Christ. So, when Saul was traveling to Damascus, and was suddenly blinded by the light of heaven, he had no idea what was going on. Even though he heard a voice, he had no clue who it was or where it was coming from. So, on Saul's part, it took a lot of trust to believe what the voice was telling him and obey the instructions he had been given.

At the same time that Saul became blind, a man named Ananias was called to go deliver him from the darkness. Ananias knew about this man Saul and all the evil things he felt towards the Christian faith. Though Ananias was uneasy and unsure about everything, he was able to realize that God would be there to protect him and guide him, no matter what happened. So with the help of Jesus Christ, Ananias went to the place where Saul was staying, prayed for him, and God filled him with the Holy Spirit.

Thanks to Ananias, Saul was then turned into Paul and began to spread the word of Jesus Christ to everyone. Instead of traveling around to kill off the Christians, he began traveling around to build up the Christians and to convert those who didn't believe.

This story is an example of faith and trust in God, on both Saul's and Ananias' part. God brought both people through and blessed them in return.