



Suddenly I See

Bible Story: Suddenly I See (Paul Becomes a Believer) • Acts 9:1-9

Bottom Line: Knowing Jesus changes the way you see everything.

Key Question: How does God try to get your attention?

Memory Verse: *Faith is being sure of what we hope for. It is being sure of what we do not see.*
Hebrews 11:1 NIV

Life App: Faith—Trusting in what you can't see because of what you can see

Basic Truth: I can trust God no matter what.

Story: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways (Large Group, 35 minutes)

Engage kids' hearts through a dynamic and interactive Bible story, worship, and prayer experience in a Large Group setting.

SFX: Play high-energy music as kids enter.

CG: Theme Slide

Host enters.

Welcome

Host has lots of energy as he or she welcomes everyone to [Name of Environment]. Host is relatable and inviting. Host can talk about something that happened culturally throughout the week like a big sporting event (NBA and NHL Finals), movie opening, a viral video on YouTube, etc. Host tells them how excited he or she is that they're there and briefly runs through what they can expect. This is especially helpful for first-time guests to make them feel like they know what's happening.

Opener

HOST: “Hey, everyone! So good to see you here today! Is everyone, FOCUSED?! That’s right. All summer we’re looking at what it means to focus and take a closer look at what it means to put your faith in God. And we’ve got a great way to kick us off this morning. So how many of you have ever played Simon Says? Yeah, I thought so. And I’ll be honest, I still like a good game of Simon Says every now and then. The thing about Simon Says is that it requires a lot of focus. You have to listen to hear if the person says if ‘Simon Says’ to do the command or not. But you’ve been playing ‘Simon Says’ since you were *little* kids, right? I think we need a bit more of a challenge for you all! Some of you might have played this before; it is called Nibblety-Bibble. Sure, it might sound like a silly game, but this is a game that will take all of the focus you can find. Here’s how you play!”

Host introduces and then leads Nibblety-Bibble. Before you play, lead the kids slowly through each motion and have them practice. Once they have it, play until you have a winner.

Nibblety-Bibble instructions:

1. I’ll give you a command: (Demonstrate)
 - Order up (both hands out in front, turn so palms are up)
 - Order down (both hands out in front, turn so palms are down)
 - Order nose (point your index fingers at your nose)
 - Order bows (point your fingers at your elbows)
 - Order lobes (points your fingers at your ear)
 - Order nibblety-bibble (point both fingers like guns and wave them up and down)

2. You can only move if I say “order” before the command. If I just say, “down” or “nose” and you move, you’ll be out and have to sit down.

3. This is the trickiest: You must do what the I say, not what they do. That means, I might say “Order Up” but do the motion for “Order Lobes.” You have to do the action for “Order Up” or you’ll be out.

4. I’ll start slow. But as we get going, I’ll speed up and try to make it more difficult. We’ll play until we have a winner.

HOST: “Everybody understand? Great! Let’s play!”

Start the game slow and orderly, but then go ahead and change the order or repeat commands often. From time to time leave out “order” and see if anyone moves. As more and more people get out, speed up.

HOST: *(After the game)* “Awesome job, everyone! I have a prize for the winner, but you all were amazing. Now let’s stand and worship together!”

Worship

Communicator enters Worship Leaders exit.

COMMUNICATOR SCRIPT

INTRODUCTION

COMMUNICATOR: “Good morning, everyone! As we get started, I have a question for you all. Have you ever had a moment when you realized that the way you were going was actually the wrong direction? Maybe you were in the car with a parent or on hike in the woods? Maybe you got lost or ended up some place other than where you thought you were going? Yeah? Me to!”

Tell a personal story similar to the one below or consider using a “Imagine that” scenario.

“A few years ago I was driving around Washington D.C. If you’ve never been there, let me just say that driving around D.C. can be really hard, especially if you are not used to it. I wanted to go to the Washington Monument. I thought, this can’t be difficult. There will be signs. I’ll be fine. And sure enough, as I drove, I could SEE the Monument. I knew where I needed to go. And so, I just turned car down a street and headed straight toward the Washington Monument. Simple! Except, it only took a moment to realize that EVERY SINGLE car on the road was headed towards me and there was no lane for cars headed in my direction. In other words, I had just turned the WRONG WAY on a ONE-WAY street! In the middle of one of the busiest cities in America. I realized pretty quickly that I was headed the wrong way. And all of the other cars were gracious enough to use their horns and gestures to let me know that too!”

TENSION

COMMUNICATOR: “So it may not be that you make a wrong turn onto the wrong way in one of the biggest cities in America. You may get lost trying to find a classroom in a new school. You may even get lost trying to beat a level on your favorite video game. But have you ever thought about getting lost in life? Not just your physical world but in the decisions you make or the friends you have, and how those decisions impact where you’re headed. What happens when you discover the way you’ve been going IN LIFE isn’t the right way?”

“That’s a big question—one that almost everyone might be asking him or herself at some point. When we have big questions, the first place we should go is the Bible. In the Bible, we can learn from the people who God inspired to write down answers to questions just like this. We can learn from their true stories and their experiences with God. Like this one.”

TRUTH

COMMUNICATOR: “We find it in the book of Acts. Now if you’ve been around here the last month or so, we’ve been hanging out in the book of Acts a bit lately. Acts was written by a doctor and historian named, Luke. Luke details some of the important events that happened immediately after Jesus died and rose again and sent His followers out into the world with the mission to spread His message. You might remember that mission started small, telling those living locally in Jerusalem (*point to the sign saying Jerusalem*) all about what Jesus had said and what He had done. But then that message began to spread, going further and further into places like Judea and Samaria, and then eventually even further like . . . well, (*point to Damascus sign*) Damascus . . . reaching more and more people.”

“Many people put their faith in the good news of Jesus, that He was God’s Son sent to rescue the world from sin. But there were other people who saw the message of Jesus as bad news that threatened the way they believed in God. Many of them wanted to put a stop to the spread of Jesus’ message as quickly as possible, maybe nobody more than a guy named Saul.”

“You might recognize that name. Not because of king Saul as in the king that tried to kill David. This Saul was a different guy. You may also know him as Paul, another name he was called. You remember that sad story from a few weeks ago about a follower of Jesus named Stephen. Well, when the religious leaders dragged Stephen outside the city, they took off their coats and put them at the feet of a young man named, Saul. SAME guy. He was there giving his approval of the stoning of Stephen. He thought it was the right thing to do to try and stop the spread of this message about Jesus.”

“There’s something else you should know about Saul. He was a Jewish man, well-educated by one of the most famous rabbis—or teachers—of his time. Saul was a very smart and respected man who believed that he was doing what was right. Since he didn’t believe Jesus was really the Messiah, he thought he was doing his people a favor by trying to put a stop to the message. Actually, he probably figured that he was even doing God a favor, believing this movement was hurting God’s reputation. Saul made it his personal mission to try to silence the message of Jesus once and for all. That’s where our story picks up.”

“(Read directly from Acts 9:1a, NIV) ‘Meanwhile, Saul continued to oppose the Lord’s followers. He said they would be put to death.’”

“Woah. That is intense. Here was Saul, and he was in Jerusalem . . .”

*Communicator walks up to sign and turns the direction of
“Jerusalem.”*

“. . . and he was threatening and intimidating, and generally making life miserable for the followers of Jesus there. Saul was a one-man wrecking crew, but he was not settled on simply putting a stop to the message of Jesus *in Jerusalem*. He wanted to go further than that. Check this out . . .”

“(Read directly from Acts 9:1b-2, NIV) ‘He went to the high priest. He asked the priest for letters to the synagogues in Damascus. He wanted to find men and women who belonged to the Way of Jesus. The letters would allow him to take them as prisoners to Jerusalem.’”

“Saul got permission to take his persecution on the road. (*Standing at the sign*) He was headed to (*Pause for response.*) Damascus, that’s right. And when he found followers of Jesus in Damascus, he was to then bring them all the way back to (*pause for response*) Jerusalem . . . to face the consequences there.”

“Now before we move on, let me just clearly say this again. Saul really thought that what he was doing was the RIGHT thing and that he was HELPING his people by putting a stop to what he saw as a dangerous movement following a fake Messiah.”

“So, Saul headed out to Damascus . . .”

Communicator walks right toward direction of “Damascus” sign.

“(Read directly from Acts 9:3, NIRV) ‘On his journey, Saul approached Damascus. Suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him.’”

“Well *this* was unexpected. Bad weather? Not quite. (Read directly from Acts 9:4, NIRV) ‘He fell to the ground. He heard a voice speak to him, “Saul! Saul! Why are you opposing me?”’”

“Okay, the flash from the sky was one thing, but now voices?! And the voice was asking, ‘Why are you AGAINST Me?’ Now that would be terrifying!”

“(Read directly from Acts 9:5, NIRV) “Who are you, Lord?” Saul asked. “I am Jesus,” he replied. “I am the one you are opposing.”

“Could you imagine this moment? All this time, Saul thought that this Jesus he was against was a fake and that His followers were all wrong. And right here on a road where he was going to have more of them thrown in prison, Jesus Himself stopped Saul and asked, ‘Why are you against Me?’”

“But Jesus wasn’t done. He had some instructions for Saul. (Read directly from Acts 9:6, NIRV) ‘Now get up and go into the city. There you will be told what you must do.’”

“Now in case we think Saul was suffering from heat stroke or hearing voices, check out the next verse. There were actually other people with him who heard this whole thing go down.”

“(Read directly from Acts 9:7, NIV) ‘The men traveling with Saul stood there. They weren’t able to speak. They had heard the sound. But they didn’t see anyone.’”

“So Saul got up . . . but there was one problem. A big problem. (Read directly from Acts 9:8-9, NIV) ‘Saul got up from the ground. He opened his eyes, but he couldn’t see. So they led him by the hand into Damascus. For three days he was blind. He didn’t eat or drink anything.’”

“After seeing Jesus for who He really is, Saul now couldn’t see. Like physically see . . . at all. For three days! Ironic, right? But where were they? (Pause for responses, then point to the sign) Damascus. The original place he was headed. But I will tell you this—what he came to do in Damascus and what he would NOW do in Damascus couldn’t have been any more different. But for that part of the story, we will have to wait until next week.”

“But let’s go back to Saul on that road again . . .”

Communicator walks over to the sign.

“When Saul left Jerusalem (*point to sign*), he was absolutely convinced that he was headed the right way. Being against Jesus and the followers of Jesus? The right way. But as he neared Damascus (*point to sign*), Saul was forced to face an important reality—what he believed was the right way had been the wrong way all along. His opposition of Jesus and His followers was not God’s work . . . it was against God’s work! Since Jesus met Saul on the road to Damascus, it must mean that Jesus is alive, and if Jesus is alive, then everything Saul believed about Him was wrong. That day, on that road, Saul saw (see what I did there?) Jesus from a new perspective, and it changed everything.”

APPLICATION

COMMUNICATOR: “At the beginning, I told you a story of turning the wrong way onto a one-way street in Washington D.C. Now in that moment, it would be one thing to turn onto that street and to realize that I had made a terrible mistake. ‘Everybody is headed toward me! I was wrong!’ But what if I had just kept going? That would do nothing to fix the problem, right? In that moment, you can believe that I turned my car around as fast as I could in order to get it headed the right direction. See, when you realize you are headed the wrong way and see the way things are supposed to be, you should do everything you can to head in the right direction.”

“Now, chances are you are not going to have a flash-of-light-and-voice-of-Jesus-on-the-road experience like Saul did. But you know what? There are lots of times when God might try to nudge us to let us know, ‘Pssst . . . you’re heading the wrong way. Turn around.’ Maybe we say an unkind word to someone, and a good friend corrects us before we go too far. We ask for forgiveness. Sometimes God can speak to us through the godly people around us. Or maybe we’re anxious and worried and find ourselves starting down the path of fear when we remember reading a promise from the Bible about God saying not to fear because He is with us.”

LANDING

COMMUNICATOR: “But how about you? Today as you go to groups, think about this question:”

CG: Key Question Slide

“**How does God try to get your attention?** Have you seen God get your attention in the past? Was it through a friend or Small Group Leader? Was it through a song you heard or verse you read from the Bible? There are many ways God can get our attention, but like Saul, we have to be willing to respond when He does and let our new perspective change the way we live. And don’t worry. If you’re not sure, don’t worry, you’ll talk more about this in Small Group. Before you head there, let’s pray.”

Communicator leads group in a prayer related to what they just heard. After prayer, Communicator dismisses kids to Small Group.

SFX: Play high-energy music as the kids exit.