

TALK IT OVER

UNLIKELY PEOPLE. UNSTOPPABLE GRACE.

ICEBREAKER

Who's someone that surprised you by changing for the better? (Examples: a wild classmate who turned their life around, a sibling who grew and matured, or even yourself!)

INTRODUCTION

God loves writing a good plot twist. In Acts 9, Saul (later Paul), a man who hunted down Christians, becomes one of the greatest voices for Jesus. In Acts 10, a Roman soldier—an outsider to the Jewish faith—is handpicked by God to receive and later share the gospel. Two unexpected people. One unstoppable God. No one is too far gone or too ordinary for God to use.

READ | Called, Not Cancelled

“As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him... ‘Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?’” — Acts 9:3–4 (NIV)

Saul wasn't just a skeptic, but a threat to the early church. He was actively persecuting Christians. But Jesus didn't cancel him; He called him. Saul became Paul, one of the primary writers of the New Testament and a bold messenger of the Gospel. Since God redeems brokenness, we should reflect His heart by seeing people not as they are, but as they can be in Him.

Why do you think God often uses the most unlikely people to do the most incredible things? (Examples: it highlights God's redeeming power, not their qualifications; it makes others take notice, etc.)

READ | Repurposed for God's Mission

“This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles...” — Acts 9:15 (NIV)

When the Lord instructed Ananias to find Saul and heal him, he hesitated. Saul had a reputation, and Ananias feared for his life. But through his obedience, God was able to give Saul not only a second chance, but a **new mission** that changed the church forever. God doesn't just erase your past, but repurposes it.

Have you ever seen God use a painful part of your story for good? Or someone else's? (Example: a recovering addict helping others get clean; a broken relationship leading someone to deeper faith; etc.)

READ | Grace for Every Nation

“God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears Him and does what is right.”
— Acts 10:34–35 (NIV)

In Acts 10, we hear about Cornelius, who was a Roman soldier. He was seen as an outsider, a Gentile. Yet God gave him a vision. In Jewish culture at the time, even entering a Gentile's home was frowned upon. Peter had to overcome his own bias to see that the gospel was never held back because of cultural, racial, or societal barriers. If God's love has no borders, neither should ours.

These radical stories prove that there is no one beyond God's reach. Who have you been praying for, but quietly given up on? Take a moment to reflect, or write their name down. God hasn't given up on them—maybe He's just getting started.

Is there a type of person or group you've found it hard to believe God could reach? Why do you think that is? (Examples: a hostile atheist, someone who's hurt you, a celebrity who seems too far gone, etc.)

WHAT WILL YOU DO

- Ask God to renew your hope for the person you wrote off.
- Pray bold prayers for their salvation—and yours, if needed.
- **As a group, discuss if you will continue meeting together for the next series!**

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Jesus, thank You that no one is too far gone. Thank You for grace that reaches us, rewires us, and gives us new purpose. We pray for those we've written off and ask You to write a new story in their lives. Use us to carry Your hope to everyone, everywhere. In Your name, amen.

DAILY DEVOTION SCRIPTURES

Day 1: As [Saul] 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 (NIV)**

Day 2: God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears Him and does what is right.

— **Acts 10:34–35 (NIV)**

Day 3: Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

— **2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV)**

Day 4: There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

— **Galatians 3:28 (NIV)**

Day 5: But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

— **1 Peter 2:9 (NIV)**