

Connected: Created to Belong

Module 3: You Are Mine (Adopted by God)

As all adoptive parents know, the process of adopting a child is frustrating and takes a big investment in time and resources. However, our own Father in heaven persevered and planned our adoption patiently, looking to the time when we would be safely in his home, loved and cherished as children of his very own.

Over the next 4 weeks, students will discover what the Bible says about ownership. What does “Lord” mean when we transform our ownership into his hands? What right does God have to claim ownership of our lives, how does it benefit us and what are our responses to his ownership?

In lesson 1, **God Cares for Us**, we establish that the premise behind God’s interest in adopting us is because he fundamentally cares about us.

In lesson 2, **God Redeems Us**, we explore the mode God uses in order to reconcile relationships broken by sin.

In lesson 3, **A Relationship with God**, we look at what that relationship with God looks like, and how it shapes who we are.

In lesson 4, **Our Personal Choices**, we recognize that we do have a choice to make, and that choice affects how we live out our lives.

This module can be viewed as an “evangelistic” unit. At the end of lessons 2, 3 and 4, there are invitations for each student to make a decision to follow Jesus.

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Module 3: You Are Mine (Adopted by God) Lesson 1: God Cares for Us

Spiritual Aim

Students will hopefully:

- realize God is personally concerned about them

Lesson Objective

Students will:

- learn that their heavenly Father cares deeply for them, so they can take their earthly worries to him

Materials Needed

- Approx. 50 straws per 5 students
- 1 roll of gaffer or duct (i.e., cloth) tape
- 1 pair of scissors per group
- 1 hardboiled egg per 5 students
- Step ladder or safe point from which to drop the egg onto hard flooring1 tarp or plastic tablecloth to cover the drop zone
- 5 small prizes (e.g., candy bar) [teaching tip 5]
- 1 Bible per 5 students (preferably 1 per student) [teaching tip 7]
- 1 large sheet of drawing paper per 5 students
- Various colours of markers and pencil crayons for students to share
- 3 chart papers, each with 1 of the following verses written on it beforehand:
 - 1 Peter 5:6–7
 - Matthew 11:28
 - Psalm 55:22
- 5 Post-it Notes per student
- 1 pen per student
- Large, moveable cross (this can also be drawn on a large chart paper)

Minds On (approx. 30 minutes)

1. Divide students into groups with 5 members in each [teaching tip 15].
2. Designate a space for each team (preferably out of sight from one another).
3. Provide each team with 50 drinking straws, a hard-boiled egg, a 1-meter length of gaffer or duct tape and scissors.
4. Challenge students to design and build a structure that will prevent their eggs from breaking when dropped from a height of 5 feet onto a solid floor. They will only have 15 minutes to complete their task.

5. During the exercise, walk around the teams giving time checks and monitoring progress. Do not give any guidance for their designs. If questioned, simply restate the objective.
6. After 15 minutes, call the teams together and meet around the drop area, which should be covered with a tarp or cloth to protect the floor.
7. Have each group drop their egg (either from a step ladder or an elevated floor like a stage).
8. Award the winning team with a small prize.
9. Ask each team to discuss the following questions and report back to the large group:
 - a. What strategies were used to protect the egg inside?
 - b. How did you feel when you saw the egg break? Or how did you feel when you designed and used strategies to protect the egg?
 - c. How are the strategies that you used to protect the egg similar to ways that God cares for us?

Prompt: If I asked you to fill in the blank in the statement: “Sometimes I worry about _____”, most of you would have no trouble coming up with at least 1 or 2 areas that are causing you stress. “Do not worry” is a great reminder of a biblical perspective that originates in Jesus’ teachings. Our heavenly Father cares deeply for us, so we can take our worries to him. Let’s take a few moments to look at the Bible so we can ground ourselves in this truth.

Action (approx. 30 min.)

Scripture Reading:

1. Assign each team 1 of the following passages. If there are more than 3 teams, assign passages to multiple teams [teaching tip 3].
 - a. Psalm 139:1–6 (David realizes that God is *omniscient* — God knows every aspect of our lives)
 - b. Psalm 139:7–12 (David realizes that God is *omnipresent* — God is everywhere at all times)
 - c. Psalm 139:13–18 (David realizes that God is *omnipotent* — God has all power in heaven and earth)
2. Each team has 10 minutes to come up with a visual image or an object lesson that summarizes the passage. They can either explain that visual image to the large group or draw the visual image.
3. After 10 minutes, have each group share their visual image.

Prompt: Based on this passage, you’ve seen that God knows you and knows you very well. You matter to God, even if you don’t always feel like it.

Voting with Your Feet:

1. Have the following verses posted on large sheets of chart paper:
 - a. 1 Peter 5:6–7
 - b. Matthew 11:28
 - c. Psalm 55:22
2. Have students think about which of the verses resonates the most with them and why.
3. Instruct them to raise their hands when they’ve made their choices.
4. Once everyone has raised their hands, have students move to stand by the verse that most resonates with them.
5. Within those groups, have students share 1 reason why they chose that verse. Have a spokesperson prepare a summary of the group’s thoughts.

6. After 10 minutes of discussion, draw the group back together and have the spokesperson from each group report.

Prompt: Notice some of the common themes. First, God knows you individually better than anyone else. Second, God cares about you and wants to work with you in any difficult situation.

Consolidate/Debrief (approx. 15 min.)

Post-it Prayers:

1. Have each student take about 5 Post-it Notes.
2. Given them 5 minutes to write up to 5 concerns they have (1 per Post-it).
3. These notes will be anonymous, so ask them not to write their names on them.
4. When students are ready, they can come up and post those concerns on the cross.
5. After posting, ask each student to sit down quietly by themselves.
6. After everyone has posted, ask them to gather around the cross.
7. Pray for the concerns on the Post-it Notes. Encourage students to remember they are now with Jesus and they can talk to him about those concerns whenever they wish.

Prompt: We all carry concerns with us. Jesus doesn't want us to keep them to ourselves. He wants us to share them with him because he really does care.

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Module 3: You Are Mine (Adopted by God) Lesson 2: God Redeems Us

Spiritual Aims

Students will hopefully:

- understand that they are redeemed by God
- be filled with purpose
- help to lead others towards being redeemed

Lesson Objectives

Students will:

- identify how Will and Zacchaeus are redeemed by The Ringleader and Jesus respectively
- recognize the process that led to the redemption
- consider if they wish to be redeemed by Jesus

Materials Needed

- Video equipment to show 2 video clips [teaching tip 1]:
 - The Butterfly Story: thebutterflycircus.com/short-film/
 - God's Story: Zacchaeus: vimeo.com/57088533
- Popcorn (or other snacks) and drinks [teaching tip 5]
- 1 copy of Appendix A per 2 students
- 1 copy of Appendix B per 2 students
- 1 pen per student
- 1 Bible per 2 students [teaching tip 7]

Pre-Lesson Preparation: Consider making this lesson feel like a double-feature “movie night”.

Minds On (approx. 30 min.)

Prompt: We're going to watch 2 videos: “The Butterfly Circus” and “God's Story: Zacchaeus”. Pay close attention to see if you can spot the similarities between the 2 stories.

Show both videos starting with “The Butterfly Circus” and then “God's Story: Zacchaeus”.

Leader's note: “The Butterfly Circus” is set at the height of the Great Depression and tells the story of a kind and generous ringleader from a renowned circus as he guides his entertaining troupe through the devastated American landscape, lifting the spirits of impoverished people along the way. During their travels, they discover a man named Will without any limbs at a competing carnival's sideshow. They reach out to the “man who God himself has turned His back upon”, and soon, the outcast of a man joins their circus. Will spends the rest of his days

with the loving entertainers of The Butterfly Circus trying to discover how God has enabled him to be a blessing to others.

The second video is based on the story of Zacchaeus from Luke 19:1–10.

Action (approx. 30 min.)

Modified Jigsaw Expert Groups: [teaching tip 20]

1. To form expert groups, give each student a number (1 or 2), ensuring the 2 groups are divided evenly.
2. Have Group 1 go to the left wall, while the other students go to the right wall.
3. Then have students choose their own cluster groups of 3 to 4 people.
4. Give Appendix A to all students in Group 1 and Appendix B to all students in Group 2.
5. Distribute Bibles for Group 2 to use with their questions.
6. Each person should be prepared to share their group's answers, so they may write notes as necessary.
7. Give students 10 minutes to complete the questions and then move them into home groups.

Modified Jigsaw Home Groups:

1. Ask each student from Group 1 to partner with someone from Group 2. If you have an odd number of students, there will be 1 group with 3 members.
2. Each group needs to identify the common elements between the 2 videos, including which characters in The Butterfly Circus could have represented the people in the Zacchaeus story and the similar lessons demonstrated in both.
3. Next ask each group to come up with a definition for the word "redemption".
4. Afterwards, each pair will have a spokesperson ready to share their conclusions with the large group.
5. After 5 minutes, gather everyone back to the large group and have 4 or 5 pairs share their answers. From their answers, formulate a definition for "redemption".

Leader's note: Allow students to give input in shaping the definition until a near consensus is formed.

Consolidate/Debrief (approx. 10 min.)

Prompt: Tonight we watched a heartwarming story about a man who moved from ridicule and desperation to hope and leadership. Because someone loved him — Mr. Mendez in this example — Will was able to live a life that was completely different from what he'd always known. We also saw a story from the Bible about a man in a similar condition to Will. His name was Zacchaeus and he was despised by everyone in his town, mainly because he robbed from them in the name of government taxes. But when Jesus met him, Zacchaeus's life was changed forever. Both Will and Zacchaeus were redeemed by others, and their lives transformed from that day forward.

Ask: Do you want to be redeemed by God? (Each person can answer silently.)

Prompt: If you have already been redeemed by God, I'm going to ask you to pray this prayer, repeating after me. You can pray out loud or silently if you wish.

Pray (slowly so that students can join in): Lord Jesus, thank you for redeeming me. Even though I may not always remember it, I trust that once I've been redeemed by you, it cannot be removed by anyone else. Thank you that you are still changing my life. Amen.

Prompt: If you have never been redeemed but would like to accept Jesus' redemption, I'm going to ask you to pray this prayer, repeating after me. You can pray out loud or silently if you wish.

Pray (slowly so that students can join in): Lord Jesus, at this moment, I recognize that my life needs to be changed by you because you are God. While I may not completely understand what it means to be redeemed by you, I ask you to redeem me. At this moment, I choose to follow you Jesus, as you teach me what a redeemed life can really look like. Thank you for providing this opportunity for me, Jesus. Amen.

Prompt: If you've made that decision, I would invite you to tell a friend and a leader about it after. For those who aren't ready yet, there is always space here for you to consider making your decision. I would encourage you to talk with a friend who is following Jesus or another adult leader to understand more about what it means.

Leader's note: Be sure to follow up with and support students who either prayed the second prayer or who have questions.

Appendix A: Group 1

1. How do you think Will felt when he was part of the sideshow in the first circus?
2. The barker introduced Will as “the man who God himself has turned his back upon.” Do you think that was true?
3. Will stowed away in The Butterfly Circus. What difference did Will discover between the 2 circuses?
4. How did Will change after he joined The Butterfly Circus?
5. In what ways did some of the other circus performers change when they joined The Butterfly Circus?

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Module 3: You Are Mine (Adopted by God) Lesson 3: A Relationship with God

Spiritual Aims

Students will hopefully:

- experience a deeper relationship with God
- recognize they are children of God

Lesson Objectives

Students will:

- discern the difference between God as master versus God as Father
- understand the opportunity to move from slave to child is because of Jesus' reconciliation

Materials Needed

- 1 deck of playing cards in order (2s, 3s, 4s, etc.)
- 1 sheet of chart paper per 4 students
- 1 marker per 4 students
- 1 Bible per student (or minimum 1 Bible per 4 students) [teaching tip 7]
- Scrap paper
- 1 pen per student
- 1 copy of Appendix C per 4 students
- Recording paper
- 1 copy of Appendix D for reference

Minds On (approx. 20 min.)

Round 1:

1. Choose a student to be the Master.
2. All the other students will line up on the opposite side of the room from the Master.
3. Students will proceed towards the Master's side of the room when you say "go".
4. If they are tagged by the Master, they need to sit down.
5. Repeat step 3 until everyone has been tagged or 10 minutes have elapsed.

Leader's note: This game is similar to Dr. Octopus. Make sure you have lots of room for students to run. Consider doing this in a gym or outside in a field (with the boundaries properly marked). If you are confined to a smaller space, you can play in rounds instead of everyone at once (e.g., send students across the room in groups of 5), or make the movement more difficult (e.g., everyone has to crab walk across the room).

Round 2:

1. Choose another student to be the Master and also select a student to be the Saviour.

2. The instructions are the same as Round 1, with the addition that the Saviour can now tag those who are sitting to set them free.
3. When the game is over, ask:
 - a. How hard was it to avoid the Master?
 - b. For those who were tagged in both the first and second round, were there any different feelings you had between the different rounds?
 - c. Did it make a difference that the Saviour was in the second round?

Action (approx. 25 min.)

Flow Chart Design: [teaching tip 8]

1. Take the same number of playing cards as there are students. Keep the cards in order (i.e., all 2s, 3s, etc. together).
2. Divide students into groups of 4 using the playing cards.
3. Students will gather in groups based on the numbers on their cards (i.e., all 2s, 3s, etc. grouped). Designate a space where each group will go.
4. Provide each group with a sheet of chart paper and a marker, some scrap paper and pens, at least 1 Bible and a copy of Appendix C.
5. Assign Galatians 4:3–7 to all the odd-numbered groups and 2 Corinthians 5:17–21 to the even-numbered groups.
6. Each group is to create a flow chart of the change the passage shows can be made for a person. (See Appendix D for the suggested answers.)
7. Suggest they use the scrap paper to figure out what the flow chart could look like, and then write the final draft on the chart paper.
8. Each group should have a spokesperson to share their group's results.

Leader's note: For more information about flow charts and some examples, check out en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flowchart and look at the samples in Appendix C.

After groups have shared, have them identify the common elements between the 2 charts. Ask a student to volunteer to write them on the recording paper.

Prompt: Paul, the author of both these passages, understood Jesus came in the flesh (he was born of a woman) to free us from that old master (the law). It is no longer our relationship to the law that determines our situation in the divine household. Instead, it is our relationship to Christ (the rightful Son and heir) that determines our new status in the family. Consequently, as adopted sons and daughters, we do what children do (call their father *Abba* or "Daddy") and receive what children receive: blessings and inheritance.

Consolidate/Debrief (approx. 10 min.)

Prompt: For some of us, looking at God as Father instead of master is a radical change. However, this is an invitation Jesus extends to each of us, asking us to trust him in restoring our relationship back to father-child instead of master-slave. I want to extend the same opportunity right now as was given last time.

Ask: Do you want to restore that father-child relationship with God? (Each person can answer silently.)

Prompt: If you are already in that relationship, I'm going to ask you to pray this prayer, repeating after me. You can pray out loud or silently if you wish.

Pray (slowly so that students can join in): Lord Jesus, thank you for coming and paying the price for my sins. It's allowed me to be a child of God once again. Help me to understand that relationship more and more each day. Amen.

Prompt: If you haven't thought of yourself as a child of God, but would like to enter that kind of relationship with him, I'm going to ask you to pray this prayer, repeating after me. You can pray out loud or silently if you wish.

Pray (slowly so that students can join in): Lord Jesus, you came and paid for my sins so I could be a child of God. Forgive me for all my mistakes that kept me as a slave to sin. Thank you that you paid the price so I can be free to be in relationship with God. Help me to better understand that relationship with God the Father every day. Thank you for providing this opportunity for me, Jesus. Amen.

Prompt: If you've made that decision, I would invite you to tell a friend and a leader about it after. For those who aren't ready yet, there is always space here for you to consider your decision. I would encourage you to talk with a friend who is following Jesus or another adult leader to understand more about what it means.

Leader's note: Be sure to follow up with and support students who either prayed the second prayer or who have questions.

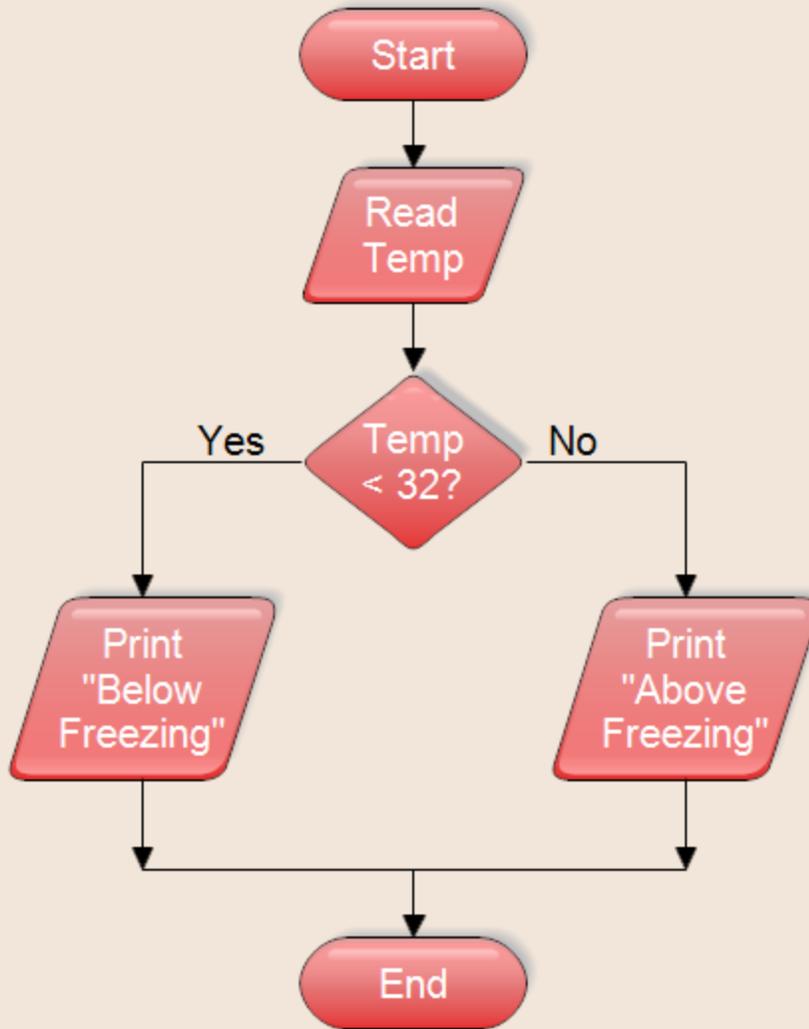
Appendix C

Flow Chart Symbol	Meaning	Explanation
	Start and end	The symbol denoting the beginning and end of the flow chart.
	Step	This symbol shows that the user performs a task. (Note: In many flow charts steps and actions are interchangeable.)
	Decision	This symbol represents a point where a decision is made.
	Action	This symbol means that the user performs an action. (Note: In many flow charts steps and actions are interchangeable.)
	Flow line	A line that connects the various symbols in an ordered way.

www.teachengineering.org/collection/uno_/lessons/uno_appinventor/uno_appinventor_lesson01_figure2.jpg

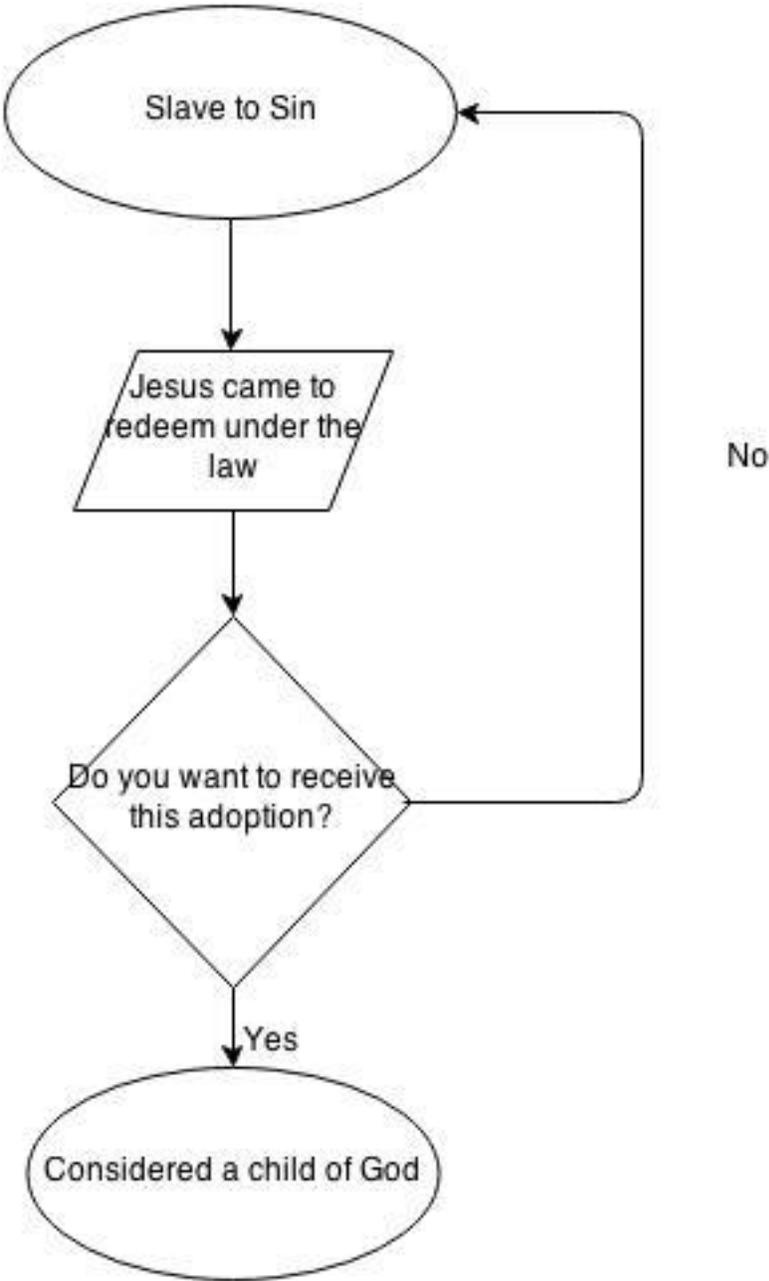
The source of this graphic is TeachEngineering.org. Used with permission. All rights reserved.

Flowchart

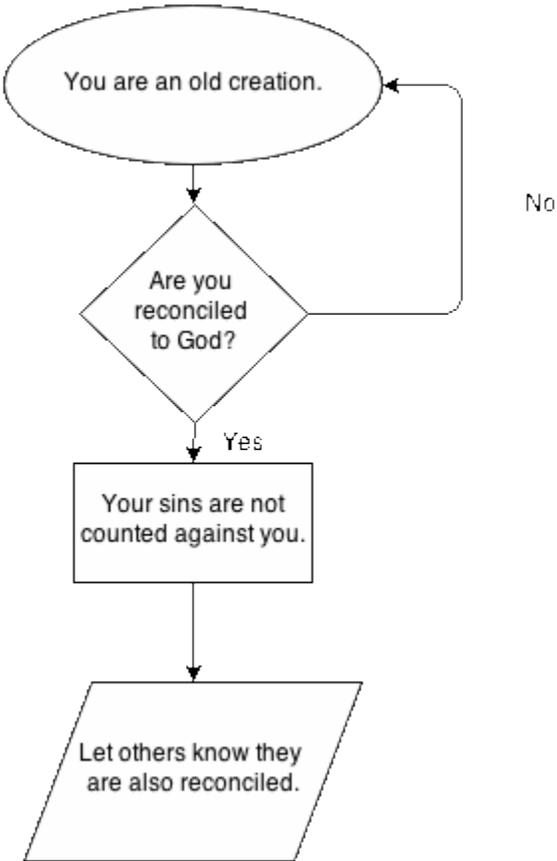


http://www.rff.com/flowchart_input_output.htm

Appendix D: Galatians 4:3-7



2 Corinthians 5:17-21



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Module 3: You Are Mine (Adopted by God) Lesson 4: Our Personal Choices

Spiritual Aim

Students will hopefully:

- transfer their ownership into God's hands

Lesson Objective

Students will:

- understand their responses to God's ownership in order to make the personal choices that are required, be willing to change and to continue their commitments

Materials Needed

- Minimum of 10 Post-it Notes per student
- 1 pen per student
- Minimum of 6 Bibles [teaching tip 7]
- 6 copies of Appendix E
- Equipment to show a video from a camera or cell phone (including LCD projector, laptop, speakers)
- 6 sheets of chart paper
- At least 6 sets of several coloured markers
- Recording paper and pen

Minds On (approx. 5 min.)

Post-it Note Brainstorm:

1. Give every student at least 10 Post-it Notes and a pen.
2. Give them 1 minute to generate a list of the choices they make every day, or some of the choices they have made in the past 24 hours, writing 1 item per Post-it Note.
3. After the minute is complete, have students stick their Post-it Note on a designated wall.

Prompt: Looking at this, it seems like we make lots of different choices every day, both big and small.

Action (approx. 45 min.)

Acts 9:1–20 Re-Enacted:

1. Divide students into 6 groups by numbering everyone from 1 to 6.
2. Each group will create either a drama (performed live or via a video recording on a camera/cell phone) or a storyboard of Acts 9:1–20.

3. Dramas can be contemporized. Storyboards do not have to be elaborate (stick figures are fine). For their presentations, here are some questions for groups to consider (Appendix E):
 - a. Who is Saul?
 - **Leader's note:** Saul was a Jewish religious ruler who had been persecuting the believers in Jerusalem (v. 1).
 - b. Why did Saul go to the high priest and what was the reason he went to Damascus?
 - **Leader's note:** Saul went to the high priest for letters that would grant him authority to arrest believers in Damascus and have them taken back to Jerusalem to be put in prison (v. 1–2).
 - c. What dramatic way did the Lord get Saul's attention?
 - **Leader's note:** Saul travelled along the road to Damascus and a light from heaven flashed around him. (v.3).
 - d. What did the voice ask him and whose voice was it?
 - **Leader's note:** Falling to the ground, Saul heard a voice say, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" (v. 4).
 - e. How did Saul respond?
 - **Leader's note:** When Saul asked, "Who are you, Lord?" The Lord replied, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting." (v. 5). When Saul persecuted Jesus' followers, he was persecuting Jesus! Jesus really was and is alive. God wanted Saul to believe that Jesus was the Christ, that God promised to send to save us from sin. He wanted Saul to see that Jesus had truly risen from dead. Trembling and astonished, Saul believed in Jesus and followed his directions (v. 6).
4. They have 25 minutes to complete this activity [teaching tip 8]. Afterwards, have each group present their drama, video or storyboard.

Review:

1. Returning back to their groups, have students compile a list of Saul's choices and responses in this passage. Write them on your preferred recording paper and post it on the designated wall when done.
2. Answers can include but are not limited to:
 - Following Jesus requires us to make the personal choice to believe him.
 - Following Jesus requires us to be willing to change things such as attitudes, lifestyle, etc. For example, Saul persecuted Christians, but he was willing to change, love God and stand firm in his commands.
 - Following Jesus requires our personal commitment. Saul (Paul) was thrown in jail several times and people were against him but he remained committed to the mission as God required.
3. Compare each group's answers and highlight the common themes.

Consolidate/Debrief (approx. 10 min.)

Prompt: Ultimately, the Christian faith is founded on a choice: Who will you follow? Yes, it includes the fact that Jesus paid the price for your sins so you can be free, because he cares for you. Maybe that makes sense and maybe you're still getting your head around it. But the choice Jesus presents is simple: Will you follow me? The last 2 weeks, we've explored this opportunity, which Jesus is always offering.

Ask: Do you choose to follow Jesus? (Each person can answer silently.)

Prompt: If you already have chosen to follow Jesus, I'm going to ask you to pray this prayer, repeating after me. You can pray out loud or silently if you wish.

Pray (slowly so that students can join in): Lord Jesus, thank you for allowing us me to choose. Thank you that I can follow you. I trust you with my life. Holy Spirit, help me to follow no matter what. Amen.

Prompt: If you haven't made that choice yet, but would like to make a decision to follow Jesus, I'm going to ask you to pray this prayer, repeating after me. You can pray out loud or silently if you wish.

Pray (slowly so that students can join in): Lord Jesus, you've presented me with a choice now. I don't want to continue living life my own way. I want to follow you as you show me how to live it best. Thank you for your sacrifice and paying for my sins so I can follow you unhindered. Help me, Holy Spirit, to follow no matter what. Amen.

Prompt: If you've made that decision, I would invite you to tell a friend and a leader about it after. For those who aren't ready yet to follow Jesus, there is always space here for you to consider your decision. I would encourage you to talk with a friend who is following Jesus or another adult leader to understand more about what it means.

Leader's note: Be sure to follow up with and support students who either prayed the second prayer or who have questions.

Appendix E

1. Who is Saul?
2. Why did Saul go to the high priest and what was the reason he went to Damascus?
3. What dramatic way did the Lord get Saul's attention?
4. What did the voice ask him and whose voice was it? (9:4,5)
5. How did Saul respond?