TAKEAWAY

EVERYONE, EVERYWHERE

Part Seventeen: Acts 9:1-19

At Maybridge we want to be a church of disciples who make disciples – we hope this takeaway session encourages practical outcomes in the lives of the individuals in your group. The focus of group discussion should be on becoming 'doers of the word' and not just hearers or people who enjoy a good discussion!

SHARE

- Who do you know that would greatly surprise you if you heard they had become a Christian, and why?
- As you look back on your faith journey, what one or two events seem the most significant? Why do they stand out?

INTRODUCTION

The book of Acts shares the account of the early church as they take the gospel, which is *for* everyone everywhere, *to* everyone everywhere. In this session, we look at the story of Saul's dramatic encounter with Jesus, who appeared to him in the middle of the road while he was on the way to persecute Christians in Damascus.

READ

Acts 9:1-19

DISCUSS

This story is quite familiar to many Christians. What stands out to you reading it afresh?

Saul was a very religious, highly intelligent, morally stringent man who was respected by his peers. Why did Jesus need to meet him?

In what ways do we tend to manufacture a version of God that perfectly (and coincidentally!) aligns with our own personal, cultural, or political preferences—just like Saul did? How does God disrupt that?

Saul went from 'breathing threats' against Christians to becoming one. What does this tell us about the reach of God's grace? Is there anyone you secretly feel is 'too far gone' to be changed by God?

Jesus appeared to Saul in a remarkable way, but this sort of supernatural moment of revelation does not happen to most Christians. Why do you think that is? Why doesn't Jesus appear like this to more people, if God wants them to know Him?

Jesus asks Saul why he is persecuting *Him*, even though Saul was arresting everyday Christians. What does this reveal about how closely Jesus identifies with the church and its suffering?

What is daunting about Annania's God given assignment from the Lord in verses 10-31?
Why is Ananias necessary to the story? What was his role?

What might it look like to be an Ananias figure to someone who'd had an encounter with God or was spiritually curious?

After his conversion, Saul is quite quickly involved in ministry – he goes and preaches about Jesus in local synagogues. What sort of expectations do you think we should have of people who come to

faith at Maybridge? Should we quickly encourage people to take on significant responsibility or hold them back for a while?

What is one thing from this passage you think God might be inviting you to act, believe, reconsider, or investigate? Discuss these as try outs...

TRY OUT

- Is there anything from the last discussion question that you'd like to 'try out' or explore this week? Tell someone in the group and ask them to check-in with how you got on.
- Who can you continue to pray for to know Jesus?
- Who are the people you feel are out of the reach of God's grace? Note down their names and pray for them over the coming weeks. You could pray as a group every week for them over the next few months?

PRAY

- Pray for those people you feel are out of the reach of God's grace. Those who seem the least likely to become a follower of Jesus... Why not note down their names and pray for them as a group every week for the next few months?
- Pray that we would serve as Ananias did – being obedient to the call of Jesus in the face of opposition and even danger.