

CHURCH SCHOOL LESSON
DECEMBER 13, 2020
TURNAROUND

In this week's lesson we are going to discover that being a Christian means that you do things differently. What does that mean? How different is different? What words come to mind when you hear the word "different"?

Read this story and find out how Zack interpreted the word "different."

Zack was late for Sunday School. Very late. By the time he stumbled into class, it was almost over. Mrs. Livingston was saying to the class, "Remember, class, Christians are called to do things differently." Then she handed out the take-home papers and class was over.

Called to do things differently. Zack kept remembering that phrase. He always tried to do the things he learned in Sunday School. So he came up with a plan. By the time he was finished everyone would know that he was a Christian!

The next day, Zack walked to school backward. *That ought to draw attention*, he thought. And so would the fact that his pants and shirt were on backward.

When he finally reached his class (late), he handed his teacher a lemon. "Here, Ms. Sherwood, this is for you." His teacher gave him a funny look, but she didn't say anything. Zack sat down and took out his math book – only Ms. Sherwood was talking about science.

For lunch, Zack ate a bowl of cereal. The other kids stared at him and pointed. But that was nothing, like the reaction he got later. That afternoon he handed each kid in his class a bright red Valentine! (Everyone else was making Christmas tree ornaments.)

Ms. Sherwood had had enough. In the principal's office, Zack tried to explain why he was doing everything differently, but the principal just didn't buy it.

What do you think the Sunday School teacher meant by doing things differently?

How did Zack's plan to be different miss the point?

What things have you done differently because you are a Christian?

In our last lesson we learned how Paul became a brand-new person when he met the risen Jesus on the way to Damascus. This week we are going to find out how Paul's life was different after he followed Jesus.

After Saul saw a vision of the Lord Jesus, he was obedient and went to Damascus. There he received the Holy Spirit and Ananias baptized him. In answer to God's command, Saul went out and preached in the synagogues of Damascus.

Read Acts 9:26-30.

How did the disciples respond to Saul's changed life?

How did the Jews respond to Saul?

How did Barnabas help Saul?

Who else was helping Saul?

The Christians in Jerusalem were persecuted for their faith in Jesus. Many fled to the surrounding cities. Many of the Christians went to the city of Antioch. Antioch was home to one of the largest churches. Paul teamed up with Barnabas and they taught together in Antioch for one year. The Holy Spirit strengthened the church and it continued to grow.

Read Acts 13:1-4.

Who did the Holy Spirit set aside to do the mission work?

How did the church leaders show that these men were set apart?

When we first met Saul, the Bible says he was “breathing out murderous threats” to the Christians. But when Christ called Saul, a remarkable change occurred in his life. Instead of trying to destroy those who believed in Jesus, he began to tell others about Jesus so that they would believe too. His life would never be the same again. Everything he did from that point on was different.

Did you notice that in the beginning of our lesson we talked about Saul and later we talked about Paul? Saul and Paul are the same person. Saul is the Hebrew name and Paul is the Roman name. Paul is usually used to refer to the man after he went out to begin his ministry.

How would you describe Saul before he met the risen Lord?

How would you describe him after he met Jesus?

Remember Zack from our story at the beginning of the lesson? What would you say to him to help him understand what it means for Christians to do things differently?

You know, Saul was not the only one changed after they met Jesus.

Look up Luke 19:1-10.

How was Zacchaeus changed after met Jesus?

Read Mark 5:1-20.

How did the possessed man change after talking to Jesus?

What do both of these people have in common with people who meet Jesus?

Why do you think knowing Jesus helps us “do things differently?”

When we meet Jesus, we begin a process of change. Jesus can make us new people. We all have special characteristics that will help us as we serve God and help others. Paul went from someone who tried to keep people from telling others about Jesus to someone who told others about Jesus. He began to serve Jesus.

Do you know that when you become a Christian, it is just the beginning of a big change in your life? One big change in Paul's life was that he began to serve Jesus.

Think about what kind of abilities God has given you. Then think about what it would mean to dedicate those abilities to serving God. Here are three statements of dedication from the Old Testament. Look up these scriptures then answer the questions at the end.

Read Exodus 24:3. Moses presenting the people with God's law.

Joshua 24:14-18. Joshua speaking to the Israelites.

1 Kings 8:56-61. Solomon at the dedication of the temple.

What did the people promise in each of these readings?

What did they ask from God?

Now, I want you to use these Scripture readings to complete your own prayer of dedication. I will give you some help and start some of the sentences for you.

Dear Lord, You are a great God
because

I praise You because You made me
special with abilities and talents to

I know the best thing I can do with
these abilities is to

From now on I want to

Please help me

When I mess up and let other
things come first in my life, I pray
that you will

Thank you Lord, for being with me, both now and in the future. In Jesus' name. Amen

Signed

Let's close with a prayer.

Heavenly Father, help us all to do things differently because we know Jesus and our lives have been transformed by Him. Keep us safe this week in our homes and activities in the community. Amen.