

# THE ISLAND

<b>LEADER</b>	<b>DATE (am)</b> 31 May 2009
<b>HELPERS</b>	<b>TIME (mins)</b> 40 minutes
<b>PUPPETEER</b>	<b>No. of KIDS (m/f)</b>

- **SERIES / LESSON:** Witnesses for Jesus / Saul
- **SCRIPTURE REFERENCE:** Acts 9:1-31
- **CONCEPT:** The Holy Spirit can change my life

## GOALS:

- To encourage kids to engage in worship through singing.
- To help kids realise that no one is so bad that God cannot change them.
- To invite kids to be sorry for their sin and accept Jesus as their Saviour.
- To lead kids into a prayer time and help them understand that God listens.

## MATERIALS NEEDED:

- ✓ DVD player / laptop / projector / screen, etc.
- ✓ Song DVD
- ✓ Treasure chest with special agent badge inside (from last week's activity)
- ✓ The Island Question Box (be creative with this – you could use a decorated shoe box, a CD/photo storage box, etc. Perhaps make a slit in the lid for kids to post their papers through. Have some slips of paper and pencils available close to or attached to the box. Only open the box after the session in privacy. Use this how you feel is appropriate in subsequent sessions – you may want to address some questions during the time you have with the kids collectively, or you may want to talk to the individual child who submitted the question. The puppets could even answer the questions at the next meeting.)
- ✓ Flashlight
- ✓ Jug of water
- ✓ Glass
- ✓ Black and red food colouring
- ✓ A few small stones
- ✓ Basin
- ✓ Prayer Net
- ✓ Prayer cards and pen
- ✓ Name tag box
- ✓ Evangelical literature

<b>A. Worship through Music (with puppets)</b> 1. Welcome kids. 2. Sing 2 songs together ( <b><i>One Way / God you make me smile</i></b> ). 3. Open in prayer. 4. Ask kids to get their mats and sit down.	<b>8 minutes</b>	<b>You'll need ...</b>  <i>DVD player / projector</i> <i>Song DVD (Hillsong Kids – Super Strong God)</i>
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<b>B. Message</b>  <b>1. Recap</b> Ask a child to help you open the treasure chest and take out the special agent badge you placed there last week. Ask for someone to explain what the badge can help us to do.  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The GOLD piece – reminds us of heaven. Heaven is a place where there is no sickness, no death, no crying, no fear. It's a perfect paradise where anybody can go if they put their trust in Jesus. How do we get there?</li> <li>- The BLACK piece – this is to remind us that everybody is born with sin. Sin is all the bad things we have done, said and thought. There is no sin in heaven. So there is no way we can get to heaven by ourselves because we are all sinful.</li> <li>- The WHITE piece – reminds us of Jesus. Jesus is God's Son. He is perfect, with no sin. He came to earth as a baby at the first Christmas.</li> <li>- The RED piece - When Jesus grew up, He went to die on a cross. This red cord reminds us of Jesus' blood. Jesus didn't die because He had done something wrong. Remember, He is perfect. Jesus died for my sin, for your sin, and for the sins of the world. Because Jesus died, you and I have a way to get to heaven. But we have to tell Jesus that we're sorry for the bad things we have done, believe in Him and start to live His way.</li> <li>- The GREEN piece – Green reminds us of growing. Just like plants and trees grow, so we grow as believers or Christians. When we have Jesus in our lives, we try to live in a way that pleases God. How can we do this? By praying, reading the Bible, going to Sunday School or church, helping people, and telling others about Jesus.</li> <li>- And then, if we have lived our lives for Jesus, we will go to heaven to be with Him when we die (<i>show the GOLD piece again</i>). So your special agent badge will help you tell others about the good news of Jesus!</li> </ul> <p>Ask a few follow-up questions to recap the story of Philip telling the good news about Jesus to the Ethiopian man.</p> <p>*The Ethiopian man didn't understand what he was reading in the book of Isaiah. So he asked Philip lots of questions. Philip was then able to explain all about God's plan to save the world through Jesus, and the African man believed. He gave his heart to Jesus and was saved from his sin! Because he asked some questions, he was able</p>	<b>15 minutes</b>	<b>You'll need ...</b>  <i>Treasure chest / Special agent badge</i>
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to understand more. Boys and girls, everyone has questions about the Bible and about the way we do things at church. When I don't understand something, I ask my mum and dad or the Pastor or a good friend to see if they can help me. Today, I have something new for you. It's The Island Question Box. If you have a question, if there is something you don't understand, and you don't know who to ask, then you can write your question down on a piece of paper and put it in The Island Question Box. Then I will take a look at the papers and try to give you an answer the next time I see you.

If you have time, you could also recap last week's Bible verse, or refer to it if you displayed it in your room: *Taste and see that the Lord is good ... (Psalm 34:8)*

Finish by eliciting the concept: The Holy Spirit helps me tell others about Jesus.

## **2. Set the scene**

Remember we heard the story of Stephen two weeks ago? When the leaders dragged Stephen outside the city to throw stones at him, they gave their coats to a man to look after. Does anyone remember the name of that man? His name was Saul. Let me tell you a bit about him.

Saul was a very religious man. He had studied and learnt as much as he could about the Jewish beliefs. He believed in God. He knew the Bible inside out. He knew all of God's laws off-by-heart. But, Saul did not believe in Jesus. He didn't believe that Jesus was God's promised Saviour of the world. He couldn't understand what all these Christian believers were talking about. In fact, he didn't just not understand their faith and trust in Jesus, he thought they were wrong! Terribly wrong! Sinful! Criminal! In Saul's mind, anyone who believed in the Lord Jesus, and who spread His message, was dangerous for God's laws. So, Saul hated the Christian believers! He stood nodding his head in agreement while Stephen was stoned to death. And that was only the beginning. Saul made it his job to capture and arrest as many Christian believers as he could to stop the spread of the good news about Jesus. Saul was a terrible man. He showed no mercy to men or women. The Christians were terrified of Saul!

## **3. Tell the story**

News started to fly among the believers that Saul was leaving the city of Jerusalem to find more Christians to arrest. He had just been to see the most important teacher of the Law and got permission to travel over 135 miles north to a city called Damascus. Why? Because Saul wanted to track down more Christians, arrest them, and bring them back to Jerusalem as prisoners where they would most likely be killed! He figured that by capturing the Christians he would stop them from telling others about Jesus. Saul didn't realise that when he hurt God's people, he was actually hurting God himself! God wasn't going to allow that to continue for much longer ...

Saul was coming close to the end of his journey. He could see the rooftops of Damascus in the distance. Suddenly, a bright light from heaven flashed around him. *Shine a flashlight down onto the kids.* Saul fell down to the ground. What was happening to him? Next, he heard a voice from the sky say, "Saul, Saul, why do you do these

*The Island Question Box*  
*Slips of paper*  
*Pencils*

*Flashlight*

terrible things against me?”

Saul’s men, who were travelling with him to Damascus, stood watching Saul on his knees, shocked, afraid, speechless, for they could hear the voice speaking but they didn’t see anyone.

“Who are you, Lord?” Saul asked.

“I am Jesus, whom you are hurting and doing these terrible things against,” said the voice. “Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.” (Acts 9:5-6 paraphrased) *Switch off the flashlight.*

Well, Saul stood up. He turned around to look at his men, but when he opened his eyes he couldn’t see a thing! He was blind! Jesus, the bright light from heaven, had blinded Saul! Saul’s men had to help him get to the city of Damascus. For three days Saul was blind, and he didn’t eat or drink anything. He spent his time praying to God. I wonder what he was praying about.

Now, have you already worked out that God had a plan? Of course He had! In Damascus, there lived a man called Ananias. He believed the good news about Jesus and he lived his life for God. God spoke to Ananias and told him to go to Straight Street. Judas lived there. God told Ananias to go to Judas’ house and he would find a man praying in the house. The man’s name was Saul.

SAUL?! SAUL?! Ananias had heard all the stories about Saul and the terrible things he had done to the people who believed in Jesus in Jerusalem. “And now,” said Ananias to God, “Saul has come here to my city with permission from the most important teachers of the Law to arrest everyone who believes in You.” (Acts 9:13-14 paraphrased) Ananias was surely thinking that this was a death trap – if he went into a house where Saul was waiting for him, there was little chance he would get out again!

But God hadn’t finished speaking. He said, “Ananias, go and find Saul. I have chosen him to do a very important job for me. He believes in me now, and he’s going to tell many many people about me.” (Acts 9:15 paraphrased)

Ananias, even though he was scared, obeyed God. He went to Judas’ house on Straight Street and found Saul there, just as God had said. Ananias put his hands on Saul and said, “Brother Saul, the Lord – Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here – has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 9:17) Immediately, right at that moment, something like scales fell off Saul’s eyes and he was able to see again. His eyes were healed. Saul was no longer blind, and his heart was no longer blind either because now he trusted in Jesus, His Saviour. Saul got up and he was baptised (just like the African man was baptised in the water in last week’s story) to show people that he believed in Jesus.

Saul spent a few days in the city of Damascus with the believers there. Right away, he started to tell people the message of Jesus. He explained to people how Jesus had changed his life and how Jesus

was the only way they could be saved from their sin and find their way to heaven. He did the best he could to share Jesus with everyone he met. The people who heard Saul talk were very surprised. They said to each other, "Isn't he the man who caused havoc in Jerusalem among the believers? And hasn't he come here to take the believers as prisoners?" (Acts 9:21 paraphrased) But while the believers were amazed at the change in Saul, the Jewish leaders were not happy about what Saul was saying. Remember, the Jews didn't believe that Jesus was God's Saviour, so they planned to stop Saul's story by killing him! Every day and every night they kept watch at the city gates, waiting for a chance to capture Saul and kill him. But Saul had heard what was happening and his friends helped him to escape. One night, Saul's friends put him in a basket and lowered him down over the city wall.

Saul went back to Jerusalem. And after that, he spent the rest of his life telling other people the great news of Jesus Christ.

#### **4. Explain**

Saul was a bad man. *Pour water from a jug into a glass.* He hated Christians. *Add a few drops of black food colouring.* He wanted to kill Christians. *Add a few drops of red food colouring.* He even stood by, nodding his head, looking on while poor Stephen was killed because he believed in Jesus. *Add a few small stones.* But after Saul met Jesus – the bright light from heaven – on the road to Damascus, he was changed. *Shine a flashlight through the glass.* Saul realised that Jesus is the Son of God. Saul realised that what he was doing to the believers was terribly wrong! He could see that his heart was bad and sinful, and he understood that Jesus could take away his sin (*pour out the contents of the glass into a basin*) and make him clean, ready for heaven (*refill the glass with fresh water from the jug*).

After Ananias had come to visit, Saul was so happy and excited. He wanted everyone to know the massive change that Jesus had made in his heart. Saul told everyone he met that they too could follow Jesus and have Him as their best friend if they prayed, said sorry for the wrong things they had done, and asked Him to come into their hearts and lives.

Boys and girls, the story of Saul teaches us that no one is too bad to change. You might think that you can never be good enough, or that there's something stopping you from trusting in Jesus, but if Jesus can change Saul, trust me, He can change anyone! I'm going to say a special prayer right now. I want everyone in the room to close their eyes and listen. If you have already asked Jesus to take away your sin and come and live in your heart, then that is wonderful! You are already a Christian. But if you haven't done that, and you would like to ask Him today, then you can pray this prayer with me.

Dear Lord Jesus,  
I'm sorry for the bad things I've done. I don't want to have that sin in my heart. I believe You died on the cross to save me from my sin. I ask You to take away my sin now and forgive me. Please come and live in my heart and be my best friend until I go to be with you in heaven. Amen.

Keep your eyes closed a little longer. Did anyone pray that prayer

*Jug of water*  
*Glass*  
*Black food colouring*  
*Red food colouring*  
*A few small stones*

*Flashlight*

*Basin*

<p>with me for the first time? Did anyone ask Jesus to come into their hearts today? Just put your hand up so that I can see (you might want to make a note of kids who have responded). Will you please stay behind today for a few minutes so we can chat?</p>	
<p><b>C. Prayer Net</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>10 minutes</b></span></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Everyone can open their eyes again. Ask a child to explain what it means when we <i>pray</i> – We talk to God and He listens.</li> <li>Explain that prayer / talking to God is very important because that's how we get to know Him.</li> <li>Choose a child to retrieve the prayer net. Lift out the prayer cards you put there last week. Ask the kids for updates on those situations.</li> <li><i>Explain:</i> When we have something to be thankful for, or something we worry about, we need to tell God about those things. Is there someone who you would like to tell about Jesus but you can't find the right words or the right time to say it? Tell us about that person and we will pray for them. Did anyone try to use their special agent badge to explain Jesus to someone this week? Tell us about it.</li> <li>Tell kids that we are going to make a note of some special prayers today and put them in the prayer net. Next week they will tell us what happened in those situations.</li> <li>Ask a few kids if they have a prayer to put into the net. As they tell you, write their name and the topic of their prayer on a small card. Ask the child to say a prayer aloud (help them to do so) before they place their card into the prayer net.</li> </ol>	<p><b>You'll need ...</b></p> <p><i>Net (with last week's prayer cards)</i>  <i>Small cards / postcards</i>  <i>A pen</i></p>
<p><b>D. Conclusion (with puppets)</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>7 minutes</b></span></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask kids to put their mats away.</li> <li><i>Explain:</i> I'm going to put the flashlight into the treasure chest to remind us next week of Saul's blinding experience on the road to Damascus. Remember kids, no one is so bad that God can't make you clean. Tell Him you're sorry for your sin, believe that Jesus died for you, ask Him to take away your sin, make your heart clean and come to live with you as your best friend. It's as easy as that.</li> <li>Sing a closing song. (<b><i>God you make me smile</i></b>)</li> <li>Ask kids to put their name tags in the box before they leave.</li> <li>Remind kids about The Island Question Box. Remind them to come back this evening.</li> <li>Remind kids who prayed and asked Jesus into their hearts to stay behind for a few minutes. Have kids' evangelical literature available.</li> </ol>	<p><b>You'll need ...</b></p> <p><i>Flashlight / Treasure chest</i></p> <p><i>DVD player / projector</i>  <i>Song DVD (Hillsong Kids – Super Strong God)</i></p> <p><i>Name tag box</i></p> <p><i>Evangelical literature</i></p>

## THE ISLAND cont'd

<b>LEADER</b>	<b>DATE (pm)</b> 31 May 2009
<b>HELPERS</b>	<b>TIME (mins)</b> 45 minutes
<b>PUPPETEER</b>	<b>No. of KIDS (m/f)</b>

### GOALS:

- To encourage kids to engage in worship through singing.
- To reinforce today's Bible concept by learning a related Scripture verse.
- To consolidate today's Bible story by playing related games.

### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- ✓ Song DVD / DVD player / projector / screen, etc.
- ✓ Story Recap Game:
  - 20 stepping stones (Make these from sheets of paper or card. The first stone should be labelled *Jerusalem*; the last stone should be labelled *Damascus*. The stones in between should be labelled: 10 stones with a question mark; 4 stones with a Bible; 4 stones with a star. Stones should be laid out on the floor like a path from one end of a large room to the other, stuck down with blu-tack.)
  - Die (You could use a die from a board game. Alternatively, make a large die from card. Stick it together with tape and draw on the dots with a permanent marker.)
  - List of questions / Scripture references / star challenges (this is included in the materials)
  - Pencil
- ✓ Memory Verse Activity:
  - Table
  - Slide (Ezekiel 36:26)
  - 16 Styrofoam cups (each one labelled (upside down so that the wide end sits on the table) with a separate word of the verse. Divide the reference into book / chapter and verse. Label with a permanent marker, or write words on self-adhesive address labels and stick these onto the cups.)
- ✓ Game: Flashlight
- ✓ Basket with bookmarks inside (Make bookmarks by printing the template and cutting into individual bookmarks. You may want to attach a coloured thread or ribbon by punching a hole and tying the thread through it. Template is included in materials.)
- ✓ Name tag box





<p>realised that Jesus is the Son of God. Saul realised that what he was doing to the believers was terribly wrong! He could see that his heart was bad and sinful, and he understood that Jesus could take away his sin and make him clean, ready for heaven. After Ananias came to visit, Saul was so happy and excited. He wanted everyone to know the massive change that Jesus had made in his heart. Saul told everyone he met that they too could follow Jesus and have Him as their best friend if they prayed, said sorry for the wrong things they had done, and asked Him to come into their hearts and lives.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. <i>Explain:</i> God promises to make people's hearts clean and new if we say goodbye to sin and trust in Him. Here's what he says. <i>Show verse on screen and read aloud.</i> ... Saul proved that God's promise is true!</li> <li>3. Repeat verse a few times together as a group, and individually, until you feel kids know it well. <i>Move to a blank screen.</i></li> <li>4. <i>Explain:</i> Here are my memory verse cups. <i>Set out labelled Styrofoam cups in correct order on a table so that kids can see.</i> Kids, can you say the verse once more? <i>Choose a cup and take it away.</i> Jonny, can you say the verse now? <i>Help child to say the verse.</i> Well done, Jonny. Now you can come up and choose a cup to take away. Now choose someone else to say the verse. ... Mary, can you say the verse now? Well done, Mary. Now you can come up and choose a cup to take away, and choose someone else to say the verse. <i>Repeat until all the word cups are gone and the verse is memorised.</i></li> <li>5. <i>Explain:</i> Boys and girls, the story of Saul teaches us that no one is too bad to change. You might think that you can never be good enough, or that there's something stopping you from trusting in Jesus, but if Jesus can change Saul, He can change anyone!</li> <li>6. Finish with a group repetition of the verse.</li> <li>7. Ask kids to put their mats away.</li> </ol> <p><b>Idea:</b> After the session, you could write the memory verse onto a sheet of card to make a poster for your room. This will add to your decoration as well as reminding kids of the Bible concept. Then you can also refer to it next week and beyond.</p>	<p><i>Memory verse slide (Ezekiel 36:26)</i></p> <p><i>Labelled Styrofoam cups</i></p>
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H. Game – Flashlight Tag	8 minutes	You'll need ...
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Take kids to a large room with plenty of space, e.g. a sports hall (Make sure the <i>Road to Damascus</i> 'stepping stones' are lifted).</li><li>2. <i>Explain:</i> When Saul met Jesus on the road to Damascus, he was blind for three days! We're going to play a game called <i>Flashlight Tag</i>. I'm going to give a flashlight to one person. The person with the flashlight must try to tag you by shining the flashlight at you and shouting, "Blinded!" If that happens, then you are frozen. You must stand still. If you are still free, you can make a frozen person free by touching them on the shoulder and saying, "You can see!"</li></ol>		<i>Flashlight</i>

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Choose one child to carry the flashlight and start the game by shouting, "Go!"</li> <li>4. You may want to alternate the child carrying the flashlight after a minute and a half.</li> <li>5. Take kids back to your room.</li> </ol>	
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<b>I. Conclusion (with puppets)</b>	<b>7 minutes</b>	<b><i>You'll need ...</i></b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Ask kids:</i> While Saul was still in Damascus, the Jewish leaders were not happy about the change in his life. In fact, they wanted to kill him to stop him talking about Jesus. The Christians in Damascus helped Saul to escape. How? <i>One night, Saul's friends put him in a basket and lowered him down over the city wall.</i></li> <li>2. <i>Explain:</i> Saul escaped from Damascus in a basket. I have a basket with me today with some things inside for you. If you can say your memory verse again, then you can take something from the basket.</li> <li>3. Ask kids to recite the memory verse (altogether if you don't have time for individual recitation). Let them take a Bible bookmark from the basket. Encourage kids to find the verse in their Bibles when they go home and put their bookmark in that place.</li> <li>4. Invite kids to praise God's goodness to us by singing. <b>(God you make me smile)</b></li> <li>5. Close in prayer.</li> <li>6. Remind kids to come back next week! Ask kids to leave their name tags in the box before they leave.</li> </ol>		<p><i>Basket with bookmarks inside</i></p> <p><i>DVD player / projector</i>  <i>Song DVD (Hillsong Kids – Super Strong God)</i></p> <p><i>Name tag box</i></p>