



# WEEK 1

## HYBRID TEACHING GUIDE

# L O O K & S E E

## THE BIG IDEA

Jesus is someone you  
can believe in.

## THE BIBLE

Acts 9:3-9, 17-20; John 3:16-17;  
Ephesians 1:18-20

**WHAT?** *What are we talking about today?*

### ACTIVITY | What's in the Box?

- Welcome to our new series, Look & See, where we're going to engage all of our senses in order to see things a bit more clearly. First, I need two contestants who are ready to experience whatever's hiding in this box — and trust me, you're going to want this experience.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Engineer a box with holes in the sides (large enough for students to put their hands inside) and an open front (so students in the audience can see what is on the inside of the box). Players playing the game should not be able to see what's on the inside the box. Before your program, place an object inside the box (like Jell-O, a live turtle, sliced spam, worms, pine cones, or a fake plant) and place a sheet over it to ensure the players can't see what's inside before getting behind the box. Each week, place a new fun object that will provoke a response from the players. Bring two students to the front, have them place their hands inside the box, and race to see who can correctly name the object first. After the players correctly guess about what's in the box (or give up), invite them to "look and see" what was actually in the box. **NOTE: Ask any contestants about their allergies before playing, especially if you've included any animals, foods, or other potential triggers.**

### QUESTION | How was that experience?

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Ask your contestants and the remaining students the following questions and give a few of them a chance to respond.
  - Okay, contestants, tell me the truth — what was that experience like? Was it fun? Stressful? Funny? Terrifying?

- **Audience, your turn — what was it like watching their experience?**
- **Contestants, I said you were going to like that experience. Was I right?**
- **If I was wrong, are you ever going to believe me again?**

## DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Break for discussion. If you have more than ten students, split into groups so everyone can share. The starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them if you're working only with middle schoolers.*
  - **Have you ever been really wrong about something, but really sure you were right? What were you wrong about?**
  - ★ **How do you usually react when someone says you're wrong?**

## QUESTION | When you were a kid, what were you curious about?

- If you've ever been to a children's museum, you know they often have "mystery boxes" where you can reach in, touch something mysterious, and then learn something new about whatever rock, fossil, or creature is inside.
- Engaging someone's senses is a great way to spark curiosity! And kids are some of the most curious people on the planet. Kids want to know everything — like how cheese is made, what's inside that abandoned house down the street, or if you can dig a hole all the way to the center of the earth.
- **When you were a kid, what were you curious about?**
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Give students one minute to share with the person next to them. Then ask a few students to respond in front of the whole group. Follow up with those students by asking questions like . . .*
  - **What made you so curious about that?**
  - **How did you get answers to your questions?**
- Have you ever thought about . . .
  - What causes an airplane to fly? Turns out there is real science at work. Thrust. Lift. Drag. Gravity. Isn't it crazy that something as big as a plane can lift when pressure changes around the wings?
  - What about fortune cookies? How do they get all of those tiny paper inside of those things? And whose job is it to write them?
  - What about rollercoasters? Who designs them? How do you not fall out when you flip upside down?

## VIDEO | "I'm Okay!"

- We could study rollercoasters for years. We could look at pictures, talk about it with our friends, or watch YouTube videos like this . . .
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Show [this video](#) of a boy shouting "I'm okay" while on a ride.*
- . . . but nothing compares to the experience! Unless you've tried it, you really can't understand that feeling of being on a rickety wooden rollercoaster as your car climbs up that first tall incline — of hearing the final clicks of the chains, wheels, and rails below — of peering down that first

imminent drop thinking, “This could really be it!” It’s exhilarating and terrifying! Sure, watching YouTube videos is fun, but it just doesn’t compare to experiencing it.

- For the next few weeks, we’re going to talk about experiencing (not just talking about) the most incredible experience in the world. It’s not a roller coaster. (Some of those things make me kind of sick anyway.) It’s the experience of following Jesus.
  - Maybe you’re not sure what you think about God right now. That’s okay! I want to invite you to take a closer look, because you might discover something you’ve never seen before.
  - Maybe you think you already know what it’s like to follow Jesus, but there’s so much you haven’t yet experienced!
  - And if you already know and love Jesus, this series is going to serve another purpose for you. It’s going to help you better share with others why the experience of following Jesus is so life-changing.
- So if you’re ready, I hope you’ll look and see for yourself what being a Jesus follower is all about. I hope you engage your curiosity and then share what you uncover.

### **SO WHAT?** *Why does it matter to God and to us?*

#### **QUESTION | Why is experiencing Jesus for yourself so important?**

- For those of you who know Jesus, why don’t you think it’s good enough to know facts about Jesus? Why isn’t it enough to say, “My family is Christian, so I guess I am too”? **Why do you think experiencing Jesus for yourself is so important?**
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Give a few students a chance to respond.*
- Following Jesus isn’t the same as knowing facts about Jesus because no one else can have a relationship with Jesus for you.
- Throughout this series, we want to invite you to “look and see” Jesus for yourself (maybe for the first time) so you can encourage others to look and see Jesus for themselves too.

#### **SCRIPTURE | Acts 9:3-9**

- Today, I want to introduce you to a guy in the Bible named Saul, whose whole life changed when he “saw” Jesus for the first time — literally and metaphorically.
  - You might know him better as Paul, but he actually went by both names. Saul. Paul. Same guy.
  - Saul/Paul traveled all over telling people about Jesus and wrote a lot of what we call the New Testament in the Bible. His life following Jesus was pretty exciting, but it was also difficult.
  - Before Saul decided to follow Jesus, he was a pretty questionable person. He was a Jewish leader who thought Jesus was a false prophet who was leading people away from the true God.
  - Saul’s main goal in life was to stop the spread of Christianity by any means necessary — even imprisoning and murdering followers of Jesus.

- Saul was confident he was right about God, but God was about to show him just how wrong he actually was.
- In Acts 9, Saul set out on a six-day journey to Damascus to stop the spread of Christianity. On his way, something incredible happened.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read Acts 9:3-9.
- Saul is walking down the street when God shows up, in the form of extremely bright light. It's so bright, he actually loses his sight! God tells Saul to go to Damascus without any further explanation. He does it, because if God goes through all of that trouble to talk to you, you do what God says.

### OBJECT LESSON | Saul's Shoes

- So Saul sets out on his journey . . .
  - Suddenly unable to see.
  - Wondering what in the world just happened.
  - Wondering why he's going to Damascus.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Get a pair of giant ridiculous shoes or a [biblical costume](#) (complete with a robe, beard, staff, and [hobby horse](#)). Invite a few students to wear the props as they answer these questions:
  - **What do you think Saul was thinking?**
  - **What do you think he was feeling?**
  - **If you were in Saul's shoes, how would you react?**

### STORY | Talk about a time when you felt disoriented.

- Have you ever experienced something really disorienting? When we lose something we once depended on, it can be pretty confusing.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Share a time when you felt disoriented, but don't use sight imagery, since Saul's already got that covered. Maybe you had an ear infection and couldn't hear well, or got a virus and couldn't taste anything. Or maybe you lost your phone and realized you didn't have anyone's numbers memorized and couldn't find your way home without it.
- That's the closest I can come to imagining how this situation must have felt for Saul. When our lives change so quickly in a moment, it can leave us disoriented, confused, and fearful.
- Saul was only blind for a short time — probably not enough time to adjust to the new balance of his senses. But God used that time to reveal some really important things to him!
  - Saul was sure God wanted him to stop the spread of Christianity, no matter the cost — but he was wrong, so God showed him what was true.
  - Saul was sure God would have wanted him to imprison, torture, and murder the people Saul thought opposed God — but he was wrong about that too, so God changed his heart.
- God took away Saul's physical sight so Saul could see something that mattered even more than what he could see with his eyes. God needed him to see God, himself, and others in a much different way.

## DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Break for discussion. If you have more than ten students, split into groups so everyone can share. The starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them if you're working only with middle schoolers.
  - ☆ **What does it usually take to get you to change your mind?**
  - ☆ **What are some of the things you think people get wrong about God?**
  - **What did Saul get wrong about God and what changed his mind?**

## SCRIPTURE | Acts 9:17–20

- While Saul was blinded, he had to rely on God and the people God placed in his life to take care of him. One of those people was a man named Ananias, who God sent to help Saul regain his sight.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read Acts 9:17–20.
- Saul's change was drastic and appears instantaneous in this passage, but his journey was just beginning.
  - The immediate change: the way he saw Jesus and how he was determined to respond. Saul was a changed man.
  - The gradual change: how Saul changed the course of his life. The book of Galatians tells a little more about how much time he spent studying, reflecting, and meeting with other church leaders and apostles before he began his ministry.
- Saul's eyes did open again physically, but even more importantly, his eyes were open to the truth about Jesus.

## SCRIPTURE | John 3:16-17

- Here's the truth Saul's could finally see . . .
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read John 3:16-17.
- Saul had been trying to silence this very message, but after he saw the truth of these words, everything changed.
- Saul accepted that Jesus wasn't just a man — Jesus was so much more than that. Jesus was the one who could forgive Saul's mistakes and give him a new and better purpose.
- Saul saw Jesus as someone he could believe in. I wonder if you could say the same, or if maybe today is the first time you're really able to "look and see" that **Jesus is someone you can believe.**

**NOW WHAT?** *What does God want us to do about it?*

## DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Break for discussion. If you have more than ten students, split into groups so everyone can share. The starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them if you're working only with middle schoolers.
  - ☆ **Have you (or someone you know) ever changed your mind about God? Tell us about it.**

- You may have heard about Jesus before, but have you ever experienced Him? If you have, tell us about it.
- If you've experienced Jesus, how has knowing Him changed you?

## MUSIC | Amazing Grace

- There's a line in the song "Amazing Grace" that goes, "I once was lost but now I'm found, was blind but now I see."
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play a clip from your favorite version of the song *Amazing Grace*, maybe by [Hillsong](#), [Jennifer Hudson](#), [The Blind Boys of Alabama](#), or [Elvis Presley](#).
- Like Saul, we're spiritually blind without Jesus and need Him to open our eyes to the truth of who He is.
- Without Jesus, life can be confusing. It can sometimes feel like we're lost, directionless, or without anywhere to turn to get answers to our questions. Life can be really disorienting without Jesus.

## REFLECTION | Do I Believe What God Wants Me to See?

- I want us to begin this series by asking ourselves this question: **"Do I believe what God wants me to see?"**
  - What does God want me to see about who Jesus is? Do I believe it?
  - What does God want me to see about myself and my purpose? Do I believe it?
  - What does God want me to see about others and the way I treat people? Do I believe it?
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Before your teaching time, print and cut the handouts provided in your Week 1 folder. Place one under each seat, along with a pen. Encourage students to write while you play an instrumental version of "Amazing Grace."
- When God opens our eyes . . .
  - We can see living life apart from Jesus has the potential to hurt us and others.
  - We can see God loves us and is working to restore everything that has been broken and lost.
  - We can see a different way forward.
- Just like God got Saul's attention and completely changed everything, God wants to transform your life, too.
  - Maybe God brought you here today for a big change.
  - Maybe God brought you here to start a new journey with Jesus.
  - Maybe God brought you here to help others start their own new journeys with Jesus.

## RESPONSE | Seeing Jesus For Ourselves

- It's nice to have a change in perspective, but like Saul discovered, it only matters if we decide to do something about it. So what's your next step?
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Encourage students to continue writing while you ask the following questions.
  - What are my questions about my relationship with Jesus? How can I get answers to those questions?
  - What more can I do to act on the truth God has shown me?
  - Who else needs to hear, see, and experience the truth of Jesus? And how can I help?

- When we see Jesus for who He is (the Savior of the world), it should change everything.
  - It should change our perspective. It should change our lives. It should make us want to tell others what we've seen.
  - But before we can see, we have to start looking. If that's where you're starting right now, that's okay. Be curious! Ask questions! Looking more closely will help you see things about Jesus you haven't noticed before.
- God showed Saul the same thing God wants to show me, you, and the whole world. God invites us to look, and then to see, that **Jesus is someone we can believe in.**

## DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Break for discussion. If you have more than ten students, split into groups so everyone can share.*
  - **Read Ephesians 1:18-20. What's one thing you think God wants you to see right now?**
  - **Now that God has opened your eyes, how do you plan to respond?**