

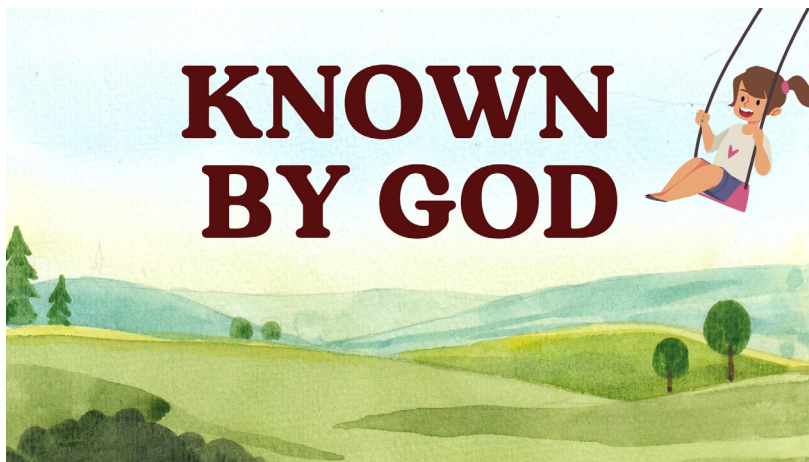


# KNOWN BY GOD



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## Known By God Elementary Series

# Series Overview

This series teaches kids all about how they are known and loved by God and how this truth produces fruit in their lives. From the story of Zaccheus, we will learn that because God loved us first, we can now love others. We will learn about Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well and how being known and loved by him prompted her to share Jesus with everyone she knew. We will also study how God gives us gifts, and we can use those gifts to share with others. Finally, we will wrap up with the story of Saul becoming Paul and following Jesus because he was known and pursued by God.

# Lesson Overview

Our final lesson in this series is about Saul's encounter with the Lord on the road to Damascus and his meeting with Ananias where Saul's eyes were opened. The children will learn how discovering that he was known and loved by God transformed Saul into Paul and how he followed Jesus radically for the remainder of his life.

# Lesson 4



Lesson 4:  
Follow Jesus



Bible Verses:  
Acts 9:1-20



Memory Verse:  
“But I will give repeated thanks to the Lord, praising  
him to everyone.” Psalm 109:30 (NLT)



Bottom Line  
I can follow Jesus because I am known by God.

Teacher Note:  
\*: Indicates directions for the teacher  
Prep: Indicates what needs to be prepared prior to the teaching

# SUPPLIES

## Opening Game: Find Jesus

- Blindfold

## Large Group Teaching: Put It All Together

- Building blocks (any kind: cardboard, wood blocks, etc.)

## Younger Elementary Verse Challenge: Sorting Truth

- Three baskets (labeled 1, 2, and 3)
- Printed verse cut up into three sections (one verse sheet per child, each section labeled 1, 2, 3)

## Preteen Verse Challenge: Memory Verse Ninja Course

- Yarn
- Two chairs
- Masking tape
- Printed out verse cut into six sections (will tape sections up on different parts of course)

## Preteen Small Group Activity: Domino Effect

- Several boxes of dominos
- A flat surface (floor or table)

# OPENING GAME

## Find Jesus

**\*Show Slide 1 - Game: Find Jesus**

**How to Play:**

This game is essentially Blind Man's Bluff. One of the children will be chosen to play "Jesus." That child's job is to call out "Saul, Saul!" A leader will wear a blindfold and play the part of Saul, walking around the room blind while searching for the child playing Jesus. All children (including the Jesus child) will walk around the room while Saul searches for Jesus. No one can run. They may only walk. Once Saul finds Jesus, a new Jesus can then be chosen.

SAY: Hello, friends!

Today is going to be a very special day. We are going to learn about a man named Saul who was very mean to people who loved Jesus until Jesus called Saul by name. That's when Saul found out he was known and loved by God.

First, let's play a game called "Find Jesus." I'm going to choose one of you, and you're going to pretend to be Jesus. I'm going to pretend to be Saul, and I'm going to put on this blindfold so I can't see anything.

First, I'm going to spin around three times, and then I'm going to start looking for the friend who is pretending to be Jesus. The friend who is pretending to be Jesus needs to call my name, "Saul, Saul," to help me find him or her.

All of you need to walk around the room and try to confuse me so I can't find Jesus. If I catch one of you, I'll ask if you're Jesus, and you can say 'yes' if you are, or 'no' if you aren't.

Are you ready?

**\*Pick a child to play Jesus. Put on the blindfold, spin him or her around, and start playing. Play as long as desired.**

Wow! That was fun, friends.

I'm so glad that Jesus called Saul and showed Saul that he was known and loved by God because, as we are going to find out, Saul decided to follow Jesus, and it changed the whole world.

Saul learned the same lesson we are going to learn: that we can follow Jesus because we are known by God.

# WORSHIP & GIVING

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**\*Show Slide 2 - Worship & Giving**

**SAY:** Woohoo! It's time for worship and giving!

In all the stories we have been reading — about Zacchaeus, the woman at the well, and today's story about Saul — we are learning that God comes and finds us, that He knows us, and that He loves us.

When we learn how known and loved we are by God, it fills up our hearts with gratitude and joy, and we want to praise Him all the time. We also want to tell everyone what God has done—just like it says in our memory verse.

Let's go praise our God who knows and loves us!



# LARGE GROUP TEACHING

\*Now it's time to begin the large group teaching time. This means you'll have all elementary ages together for the following lesson.

**\*Show Slide 3 – Known By God**

**SAY:** For the past several weeks we have been talking about how being known and loved by God changes our hearts and fills us with joy and gratitude.

We have learned this in the stories of Zacchaeus and the woman at the well.

When Zacchaeus found out he was known and loved by Jesus, he didn't want to take money anymore.

Instead, he wanted to share it because his heart had changed.

When the woman at the well found out that she was loved and known by God, she immediately went out and started telling other people about Jesus being the Messiah, the one who came to save us from our sins!

We learned last week that God knows and loves us so much that He gives each of us special gifts that He wants us to share with others.

Today, we are going to learn that we can follow Jesus because we are known by God.

We are going to read the story of a man named Saul.

The story starts after Jesus rose from the dead and went back to Heaven, and Jesus' followers were sharing the good news, the Gospel, everywhere.

Some people wanted to hear the good news that Jesus could save them from their sins, but other people didn't want to hear it.

Those people were angry at Jesus's followers, and they wanted to hurt them and make them stop telling the truth about Jesus.

Saul was one of those people.

He believed that the people who followed Jesus were evil, and he wanted to destroy them!

Let's see what happened to change his mind.

**\*Show Slide 4 – Acts 9:1-4**

**\*Read Acts 9:1-4**

1 Meanwhile, Saul was uttering threats with every breath and was eager to kill the Lord's followers. So he went to the high priest.

2 He requested letters addressed to the synagogues in Damascus, asking for their cooperation in the arrest of any followers of the Way he found there. He wanted to bring them—both men and women—back to Jerusalem in chains.

3 As he was approaching Damascus on this mission, a light from heaven suddenly shone down around him.

4 He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul! Saul! Why are you persecuting me?"

SAY: Whoa!

Saul didn't just want to hurt people who followed Jesus.

He wanted to kill them!

That's pretty bad, right?

Saul got permission from the people in charge to go hunt down men and women who were followers of Jesus so he could put them in prison and kill them.

ASK: Knowing that he wanted to kill Christians, would you have wanted to meet Saul?

**\*Allow the children to answer.**

SAY: I don't think I would either.

But, while he was on his way to hunt down Jesus' followers, a bright light from heaven shone down, and he heard someone asking, "Saul, Saul! Why are you persecuting me?"

"Persecuting" means hurting and attacking someone else because of their religious beliefs.

Persecution is wrong, and Saul was persecuting people who loved Jesus.

ASK: Who do you think is calling Saul's name?

**\*Allow the children to answer. You do not have to lead to a specific answer, but rather get them thinking and build anticipation.**

SAY: Hmm... this almost sounds like the story of Zacchaeus when someone called his name.

**\*Show Slide 5 – Acts 9:5-9**



**\*Read Acts 9:5-9.**

5 “Who are you, lord?” Saul asked. And the voice replied, “I am Jesus, the one you are persecuting!

6 Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.”

7 The men with Saul stood speechless, for they heard the sound of someone’s voice but saw no one!

8 Saul picked himself up off the ground, but when he opened his eyes he was blind. So his companions led him by the hand to Damascus. 9 He remained there blind for three days and did not eat or drink.

**SAY:** It was Jesus calling Saul’s name!

Just like that time when Jesus called Zacchaeus’s name.

Jesus just asked Saul why he was persecuting him, and he gave Saul an instruction to go into the city and wait for more instructions.

Saul opened his eyes, but he couldn’t see anything!

He was blind!

This reminds me of how we pretended Saul was blind in our game earlier.

Surprisingly, Saul decided to follow Jesus’s instruction and go into the city.

**\*Show Slide 6 – Acts 9:10-20**

**\*Read Acts 9:10-20**

10 Now there was a believer in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord spoke to him in a vision, calling, “Ananias!” “Yes, Lord!” he replied.

11 The Lord said, “Go over to Straight Street, to the house of Judas. When you get there, ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul. He is praying to me right now.

12 I have shown him a vision of a man named Ananias coming in and laying hands on him so he can see again.”

13 “But Lord,” exclaimed Ananias, “I’ve heard many people talk about the terrible things this man has done to the believers in Jerusalem!

14 And he is authorized by the leading priests to arrest everyone who calls upon your name.”

15 But the Lord said, “Go, for Saul is my chosen instrument to take my message to the Gentiles and to kings, as well as to the people of Israel.

16 And I will show him how much he must suffer for my name’s sake.”

17 So Ananias went and found Saul. He laid his hands on him and said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road, has sent me so that you might regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.”

18 Instantly something like scales fell from Saul’s eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he got up and was baptized.

19 Afterward he ate some food and regained his strength. Saul stayed with the believers in Damascus for a few days.

20 And immediately he began preaching about Jesus in the synagogues, saying, “He is indeed the Son of God!”

SAY: That was amazing!

Saul obeyed Jesus, and he went to the city, and he prayed.

God then told a man named Ananias, who loved Jesus, to go lay his hands on Saul so that Saul’s eyes would be healed.

Ananias was scared because he had heard about Saul hurting Christians, but God told him that He had chosen Saul to share the Gospel, the good news of Jesus, all over the world.

So, Ananias obeyed.

He knew he was known and loved by God, and he decided to follow Jesus even though he felt scared.

He went over, and he laid his hands on Saul, telling him the truth about Jesus.

Something like fish scales fell off Saul’s eyes, and he could see again!

But even bigger than that, Saul decided to follow Jesus and joined God’s family!

Saul was so excited about Jesus that he started sharing the good news of the Gospel with other people, just like the woman at the well did.

Isn’t it amazing that finding out he was known and loved by God and that Jesus died for him changed Saul from wanting to kill followers of Jesus to becoming a follower of Jesus?

Friends, the story gets even better than that.

Saul changed his name to Paul, and he became a missionary who went all over the world and shared the good news of Jesus.

He prayed for people, and they got healed.

He shared the truth of Jesus with kings and queens and powerful people.

He even wrote some of the books in the Bible.

**\*Show Slide 7 – Bottom Line: I can follow Jesus because I am known by God.**

Friends, finding out that you are known and loved by God can change everything, just like it did for Zacchaeus, the woman at the well, and Saul.

And when we use the gifts that God gives us, we can share His truth with everyone.

Ananias knew that he was known and loved by God, and when God asked him to share his gift with Saul, Ananias obeyed, and it was powerful.

And Saul used the gifts God gave him to share the truth of Jesus all over the world.

My friends, you can always follow Jesus because you are known by God.

And Jesus will lead you to do amazing things.

**\*Show Slide 8 – Large Group Activity: Put it All Together**

**\*Have a pile of building blocks ready. Have the children line up in two lines, the first person in each line near the pile of building blocks. Per your instructions, the child at the head of each line will pick up a block and pass it down the line to the last child. The last child in each line will put each piece down to construct a block tower. When the child has placed the block, he or she will walk up to the head of the line and pick up the next block to pass down the line (this way, the line shifts, and everyone gets a turn to build on the tower).**

**SAY:** Friends, we are all known and loved by God, and that changes everything.

Knowing this truth makes us want to follow Jesus and become a part of God's family.

Knowing we are known and loved by God makes us want to share the good news of Jesus with everyone!

Knowing that God gives us gifts makes us want to use those gifts to help each other and share Jesus.

And knowing we are known and loved by God makes us want to follow Jesus.

When we do all those things, God makes something really beautiful and powerful inside of us, and He uses us to build beautiful things together.

We are going to work together to build a really cool block tower.

I want you to get into two lines, starting here near these blocks.

When I tell you to, the first person in line is going to pick up a block, and then pass it down the line to his or her friends until we get to the last person.

The last person in line is going to take that block and put it down to begin building a tower and then switch places with the person at the head of the line and pass a new block down.

**\*Demonstrate this process.**

When we are all done, we will have built a beautiful tower.

Ready?

**\*Guide the children in all steps (including building a sturdy tower).**

**SAY:** Friends, you build such a beautiful tower together.

You each used your gifts together, and you followed my instructions, just like we follow Jesus.

I'm so glad that I can follow Jesus because I am known by God, and so can you.

**\*Show Slide 9 – Known By God**

# SMALL GROUP TIME: YOUNGER ELEMENTARY

## Memory Verse

**"But I will give repeated thanks to the Lord, praising him to everyone."**

**Psalm 109:30**

## Younger Elementary Verse Challenge: Sort the Thanks

**\*Give each child a printed verse cut into sections (labeled 1, 2, and 3). When you read the verse out loud in sections, the children will sort their pieces into the correct basket.**

- Basket 1 – But I will give repeated thanks to the Lord
- Basket 2 – praising Him to everyone
- Basket 3 – Psalm 109:30

**SAY:** Okay, friends! It's our last week to practice our memory verse, so let's do a good job!

**\*Read Psalm 109:30**

Everything we have been learning about with Zacchaeus, the woman at the well, Saul, and the gifts God gives us makes me feel so grateful in my heart. I want to give God repeated thanks, which means to thank Him over and over again, every time I learn about how much God knows and loves me. And when I am loved and known by God, I want to talk about Him with others, just like Saul did.

Let's practice that again, friends.

**\*Have the children repeat the verse after you a few times.**

Great job, friends!

Now, each of you has the verse cut into pieces. We are going to sort our pieces into the right baskets. I am going to read the verse a few words at a time, and we will throw those few words of the verse into the right basket after I read them, okay?

**\*Guide the children through this, emphasizing the matching numbers between baskets and verse papers.**

That was awesome, friends, well done!

# Making Connections:

**SAY:** Many people in the world do not know that they are known by God and that He loves them. Some people are afraid that if God knew them, He wouldn't love them because they have done so many bad things. But Jesus came to die to save all of us from our sins, and He loves us even though we have done wrong.

Jesus knew Zacchaeus, and he loved him even though Zacchaeus had done bad things. This changed Zacchaeus's heart and life, and it did the same thing for the woman at the well. God not only loves us, but He also gives us good gifts that He wants us to share with others.

When we find out we are known and loved by God, we want to follow Jesus, just like Saul did.

I can follow Jesus because I am loved and known by God, and so can you.

## Group Activity - Younger Elementary: Follow Jesus

**\*You are going to play "Follow the Leader." Lead the children in actions that reinforce the lesson. For example, you can "dance with praise for Jesus," show someone love by giving them a hug, tidy up the room, or pretend to pray for someone.**

**SAY:** Friends, we are going to play Follow the Leader! I'm going to pretend to be Jesus, and I want you to follow what I do, just like Saul and Ananias followed Jesus in our story today. We can all follow Jesus because we are all known and loved by God.

Let's play!

## Discussion Questions:

1. Did Saul like followers of Jesus at first? How do you know?
2. What was Saul about to do when Jesus called to him on the road?
3. What did God tell Ananias to do?
4. Why can you follow Jesus?
5. What is something you love about God knowing you?
6. If more people knew they were known and loved by God, what do you think would happen in the world?

**\*When your small group discussion has come to an end, close in prayer.**



# SMALL GROUP TIME: PRETEENS

## Memory Verse

**"But I will give repeated thanks to the Lord, praising him to everyone."**

Psalm 109:30

## Preteen Verse Challenge: Memory Verse Ninja Course

**Prep\*:** Create a five-step ninja obstacle course and label each step of the course with one section of the verse.

1. But I will – string yarn between two chairs for the children to crawl under.
2. give repeated thanks – lay down a masking tape line for a balance beam walk.
3. to the Lord, – put a tape line on the wall so that the children can slide along with shoulders touching the wall.
4. praising Him to everyone. – lay down three short lines of masking tape for the children to jump over, one by one.
5. Psalm 109:30 – lay down two tape lines for children to crawl between.

**The preteens need to say the correct part of the verse out loud as they complete each action.**

SAY: This is our last week with this verse, everyone, so let's make sure we've really got it down.

**\*Read Psalm 109:30**

I have thought about this verse as we have been reading these amazing stories of God knowing and loving His people. Their responses to being known and loved by God are always full of gratitude and praise. Not to mention they always seem to want to share Jesus with others.

It's amazing, and it fills me with joy and gratitude as well. Let's practice it one more time.

**\*Read Psalm 109:30 and have the preteens repeat it after you several times.**

Alright! Let's see how well you have learned this verse. We are going to go through a ninja obstacle course. You will know what step to do next by following the correct order of the verse, which you will say out loud as you do the actions.

Let me show you.

**\*Demonstrate it once, showing the intended action while saying the corresponding section of verse out loud.**

Ready? Set? Go!

## **Making Connections:**

**SAY:** We have been learning all about how God knows us, which means that He knows all the thoughts we have, the people and things that are special to us, and what makes us happy or angry. God knows everything about us, including the times we have made bad choices, and He still loves us.

When we learn we are loved and known by God, it changes us. Zacchaeus was a tax collector and was hated by others, but when Jesus came to his town, called him by name, and ate dinner at his house, Zacchaeus's heart was changed. He joined God's family, and he shared money instead of taking it!

The woman at the well was a Samaritan woman, and Jesus was a Jew. Normally, Jews and Samaritans didn't like each other. The woman at the well had been married to a bunch of different men, and she didn't know if anyone would ever love her. But Jesus came and talked to her with kindness and love, and he told her all the things that had happened in her life. Then, he told her he was the Messiah who had come to save the world from sin. The woman was so excited that she immediately told her whole town about Jesus.

We learned that God knows us so well that He picked out special gifts for each of us to use to build His kingdom and family and spread truth and life in the world.

Lastly, we learned about Saul, who was persecuting and hurting followers of Jesus until he was stopped on the road by a voice from heaven calling his name. That voice was Jesus, and he asked Saul why he was persecuting him. Then, Jesus told Saul to go into town to await instructions.

Saul was blind, but God told Ananias to go lay his hands on Saul and pray for him. Ananias obeyed Jesus, and Saul's eyes were healed, but he also joined God's family and his whole life changed! Saul became a missionary who spread the good news of Jesus across the world.

Zacchaeus, the woman at the well, Saul, you, and I — we are all known and loved by God. He has such big, beautiful plans for your life, and He sent Jesus to die on the cross for us all so that we can join God's family and get to know him like he knows us.

I'm so grateful to be known by God.

# Group Activity - Preteens:

## Domino Effect

**\*You will use domino lines on the table or floor to demonstrate the cause and effect of people learning they are known and loved by God.**

SAY: I want to show you guys how powerful it is when you find out that God not only knows you but loves you.

Do you know how you can make a line of dominos and then just push one and knock the whole line down? In fact, some people build big, beautiful lines of dominos where they push just one domino down, and it starts a chain reaction that knocks down hundreds or even thousands of dominos.

God knowing us and loving us reminds me of these dominos. Do you want to see?

**\*Narrate the following out loud as you place the dominos down in a line.**

- Jesus calls Zacchaeus by name = one domino
- Jesus goes to Zacchaeus's house for dinner = one domino
- Zacchaeus is so excited by Jesus that he wants to join God's family = one domino
- Zacchaeus is so grateful for God's love that he decides to share his money instead = multiple dominoes spread out in two lines that connect to the previously-laid one

SAY: Now, I'm going to push this first domino.

**\*Watch the dominos fall.**

See how that one experience with Jesus changed Zacchaeus's life, but it also changed other people's lives? Zacchaeus shared his money with others, and I'll just bet they heard about Jesus too when they found out that Zacchaeus was a changed man.

Now, let's try the woman at the well.

**\*Narrate the following out loud as you place the dominos down in a line.**

- Jesus meets the woman at the well = one domino
- He asks her for a drink and has a kind conversation with her = one domino
- He tells her things about her life because he knows her = one domino
- He tells her he is the Messiah who has come to save her = one domino
- The woman is so excited and grateful to be known and loved by God that she runs to tell her whole town about Jesus, and many of them choose to follow him = multiple dominoes running in three lines connected to the previously-laid one

**\*Push the dominos down.**

**SAY:** When we find out how much God knows and loves us, and we share that out of the gratitude in our hearts, it creates a chain reaction — just like these dominos — and it keeps spreading God's love to more and more people.

I'm so glad that I can follow Jesus because I'm known by God.

**\*Optional:** Have the preteens help you build a domino train to represent either Saul's journey or what could happen if they share the good news of Jesus with others.

## Discussion Questions:

1. Who loves and knows you?
2. What does it mean to be known by God?
3. What did Zacchaeus do after he had dinner with Jesus?
4. What amazing news did Jesus tell the woman at the well?
5. What did Saul do after he became a follower of Jesus?
6. As we have learned about being known and loved by God, has anything been changing in your heart?
7. Can you think of someone who might change if they found out they were known and loved by God?

**\*When your small group discussion has come to an end, close in prayer.**