



Message Title (Become)

Week 1 Member Guide



The group member will reflect back on their personal transformation journey and evaluate their growth and current conviction in becoming more like Jesus.



In the message this week we learned that Paul's conversion experience and his vision of Jesus changed everything in his life and mission. Our conversion should change everything as well and it should constantly be working to transform us into the image of Jesus.



Sometimes parents name their child after someone else or sometimes people develop nicknames due to certain character traits. Please share the story behind your name if you have one.

- If you had to change your name what would you change it to and why?

Many people confuse Saul and Paul in the New Testament and do not recognize that they are the same person. Unlike Peter, Jesus did not change Saul's name to Paul. The Hebrew name Saul was given by his parents but his father was a Roman citizen so Saul also had the Latin name Paul. As a Jewish Pharisee it was natural to go by the name of Saul, however after his conversion Saul decided to bring the gospel to the Gentiles, so he polished off his Roman name and became known as Paul. Paul was a name that the Gentiles could identify with and made it easier for Paul to share his story of Transformation.

- What do you feel the name change reveals about Paul?



Read Acts 9:1-21

Saul lived out his life in complete opposition to Jesus to the point of hating believers and even condoning murder for the sake of his cause.

- What was your life like before Jesus transformed you?
- How were you in opposition against Jesus?

In this passage Jesus confronted Saul and said, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"

- What could have been a question that Jesus asked at *your* point of transformation? "Why are you... selfish...unbelieving...distracted...disobedient..."
- How have you seen growth in your obedience to Jesus since your conversion?

When Saul's life was transformed, he began to divert his unique gifting of passion, intellect and endurance from persecuting Jesus to proclaiming Jesus.

- What are some abilities that you brought into your conversion that makes you uniquely able to serve Jesus?
- What new abilities have you discovered since your conversion?
- What abilities do you sense Jesus would want you to exercise more?

In Acts 9:11 Ananias is given the assignment by Jesus to go and meet with Saul and Pray for him. Ananias recognizes the assignment is risky and says in protest "Lord, I have heard from many people about this man, how much harm he has done to your saints in Jerusalem." Put yourself in Ananias shoes, how would you have responded?

- As a follower of Jesus what are the possible assignments He might ask of us?
- What are some risky or even non-risky assignments you have been willing to try?
- What kind of assignments have you avoided? Why?



Jesus said in Revelations 3:15-16 "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were cold or hot. So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I am going to vomit you out of my mouth."

Divide up into 3 groups, ask each group to read the following case studies aloud and listen to solve these problems:

- Label each case study with the appropriate spiritual temperature: Cold, Hot or Lukewarm?
- Which case study best resembles the temperature of your spiritual life at the present?

Hank

Hank grew up in a "Christian" home all his life. His parents were believers and taught Hank Christian values, but they were not active or involved much in church. They all attended church maybe once or twice a month but it taught Hank how to be a good person. Hank knew who Christ was and accepted Him at a young age, but he didn't really understand what it meant to be a Christian and the extent of his faith was just attending church with his parents. When Hank left for college, his parents guilted him to connect with a church of some sort. Hank, simply just appeasing his parents' wishes, reluctantly got connected with a church, but only attended church once or twice a month, sometimes less. He was introduced to John, one of the churches small group leaders and he seemed like an okay guy. That next Saturday, Hank was at an Applebee's and he saw John completely drunk at the bar and still ordering drinks. Hank was appalled that a leader in the church spent his week getting drunk, and then showed up to church on Sunday's like nothing happened. Hank wanted nothing to do with the church because of this incident, and decided to leave the church permanently. Hank still calls himself a Christian, but he has no desire to be part of a church body because of what he witnessed at Applebee's.

Judy

My name is Judy and I have been attending church for as long as I can remember, in fact, I have not missed a Sunday in years! One Sunday last year I had pneumonia and I still went. I really don't understand how people use sickness or vacations as an excuse; don't they understand their religious duty? Another thing I have don't understand is why my church has decided to transport homeless people to our Sunday morning services, they are so distracting, their clothes, their unkempt hair and their little shopping bags they carry them everywhere. How am I supposed to worship?

They ruin the whole spiritual experience for me! What really bugs me is that every year the pastor will use a whole Sunday morning trying to convince the congregation that we should find a place to serve in the church. He quotes scriptures and has people give testimonials, it's all about making me feel guilty and it makes me mad! I think the church is lucky to have someone like me that comes every week; they really don't understand how much I sacrifice. I even put a dollar in the plate once a year at Christmas. I don't like much at my church but I sure like the donuts!

Jason

Jason grew up in a home where his parents were professing Christians and attended church every week. When Jason graduated from high school he quickly fell in love and got married. After the birth of their two children, bills slowly began to pile up and Jason began to take on more and more jobs. While on the job site one day a subcontractor introduced him to a drug that would help him with energy and stamina. It helped for a little while, but the longer days he was working caused violent mood swings which began to drain heavily on his marriage. Additionally, he and wife, Terry, began to fight more frequently which only made matters worse. He began to indulge in more drugs and he fell deeper into the bondage of addiction until one day he overdosed. Terry searched for the best environment for her husband and she found a local rehab facility where they shared the forgiving power of Jesus, and Jason asked Jesus to take control of his life. Months later after stepping out of the safe environment of the rehab center, Jason was once again confronted with the temptation of drugs. He decided to indulge once more, but this time he remembered his commitment to Jesus. He knew that Jesus was the only way to victory in his life, and put down the drug. Jason confided in Terry that night and she was not pleased with the fact that he had almost relapsed. But during this conversation she recognized his brokenness, his sincerity, honesty and humility. In this conversation Jason also shared how he had made the decision to make Jesus the Lord of his life. "This is a different person!" Terry said to herself "this is a changed man!" From this moment both Jason and Terry began working together to rebuild everything in their lives. They changed their priorities and began to include Jesus into their marriage, their family and business. They started reading the Bible together and then found a church where they began to serve. While serving they were introduced to a couple who invited them come to their home along with a small group of friends to discuss the pastor's weekly sermon. They quickly developed deep relationships that helped them understand the bible more clearly. One day while working Jason bumped into the contractor who gave him the drugs months before, Jason felt compelled to share the story of his journey with addiction and his changed life in Jesus. When Jason finished his story he invited his new friend to join him in reading the bible together.



2 Corinthians 13:5 says: "Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith. Examine yourselves." Go to the link below and use the assessment as a tool to help you determine your own personal spiritual temperature.

<https://www.fcci.org/assessments/spiritual-maturity-assessment/>