

## Following a Light that Makes the Sun Look Dull

Acts 26:12-18

### Sermon Discussion Participant Guide

**Purpose of Discussion:** To think more deeply about how Jesus' *resurrection* changes how Christians should live today.

**Sermon Refresher:** Jesus' resurrection was the biggest event in history. Everyone - Christian and non-Christian - agrees that something about world history changed in the 30-50 A.D. timeframe. This was a radical, life-changing event for the apostles, one that should impact the way we live as well.

**Icebreaker:** Tell the group about a favorite movie you've watched where the ending surprised you and changed how you saw the whole story.

#### Discussion:

#### Acts 26:12–18 NIV

"On one of these journeys I was going to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests. About noon, King Agrippa, as I was on the road, I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, blazing around me and my companions. We all fell to the ground, and I heard a voice saying to me in Aramaic, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.' Then I asked, 'Who are you, Lord?' 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,' the Lord replied. 'Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen and will see of me. I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'

# THE **crossing** **small groups**

1. What about Paul's written account in Acts 26 has the sound of someone relating a personal experience?
2. Share a time in your life when an event caused you to see things in a significantly different way. (Examples: the loss of a loved one can highlight the importance of spending time together or can diminish the importance of "climbing the corporate ladder." Having a child can shift priorities significantly in many ways.)
3. Dave stated that in Paul's interaction with Jesus on the Damascus road, Jesus revealed a significant truth, a behind-the-scenes reality that changed everything for Paul. Later, Paul would write to believers in Corinth about this same reality.

## **Acts 26:18**

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## **2 Corinthians 4:4**

The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ.

How do you feel about the Bible's teaching that there is a malevolent being working behind the scenes, to blind us to the glory of God and lead us astray? Why might this teaching be difficult for you to embrace?

4. When have you experienced personal blindness to something that has been obvious to others? It can be something small or large.
5. Our culture encourages us to be true to ourselves, to follow our hearts toward our own "truth." While we think we are following ourselves, Dave stated this is actually how Satan leads us down a path of blindness. "I'll decide for myself" leads to enslavement.

In what ways might you be personally living for:

- Other people's approval?
- Other people's acceptance?
- Other people's valuing of us?

# THE **crossing** **small groups**

6. What is one way we can help each other to see our own spiritual blindness and to live out our faith, more and more, in light of His resurrection?

## Sharing and Prayer:

### **Ephesians 1:18-19**

<sup>18</sup> I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, <sup>19</sup> and his incomparably great power for us who believe.