

WHY I FOLLOW JESUS



Because He Chose Me

Connect

Share a time in your life where you made a decision on something—like taking a job, buying a home, or picking a class— that made a greater impact on you than you anticipated at the time.

Review

Take a couple of minutes to review the main ideas from the sermon:

1. **1. Necessary Initiative.** God chooses us before we ever choose him — he takes the initiative. If God didn't choose us first, we would never choose him. Our tendency is to see ourselves as either too bad for Jesus or too good for Jesus, but God took the necessary initiative with Paul when he thought he was too bad or too good. And God does the same for us.
2. **2. Relentless Pursuit.** In Acts 26, Paul recounts his conversion story while on trial for his faith in Christ. While Paul doesn't give specific examples of how Jesus pursued him, Bible scholars suggest several possibilities: he personally heard Jesus speak, witnessed Stephen's famous sermon, heard the personal testimonies of Christ followers, was familiar with the Bible, and ultimately had his own direct encounter with Jesus.
3. **3. Reassuring Confirmation.** There are four elements Paul experienced that gave him assurance that God had chosen him: Conversion, Celebration, Community, and Calling.

Read Acts 9:1-19; 26:9-15

Make Observations: After reading Acts 9:1-19; 26:9-15 out loud, give your group a few minutes to make observations on their own. Then go around the group and share what you observed and discuss them.

Discuss

1. Pastor Jim opens the message by introducing the idea that Paul follows Jesus because Jesus *chose him*, not because he deserved it but because of who Jesus is. When did you first experience Jesus choosing you? How does that truth shape the way you see your identity as a Christ follower?
2. The message highlighted the story of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15, which shows we can see ourselves as "too bad" (like the younger son) or "too good" (like the older son) for Jesus. Which of these two perspectives do you tend to struggle with more? What helps you shift the way you view yourself to be more in line with how Jesus sees you?
3. The message described several "goats" — ways Jesus pursued Paul to get his attention. What are some "goats" in your life that Jesus has used to get your attention?
4. Just as Paul's blindness was lifted when he surrendered to Jesus, when we surrender our lives to Christ, he opens our eyes spiritually. What kinds of things did you used to "see" about yourself or others before following Jesus? How has that changed since?
5. Part of the reassuring confirmation God gives us is Calling — he has chosen you for a specific purpose. What gifts or resources do you have that you can use as an instrument for God? If you're not sure yet, what steps can you take to discover your calling?

Apply

Break up into smaller groups of three, and respond to one of these two questions:

- What's an area of your life where you feel like Jesus is trying to get your attention?
- What obstacles are keeping you from living out your calling?

Pray

In your groups of three, spend a minute or two thanking Jesus for choosing us and relentlessly pursuing a relationship with us. Close with prayer asking for courage to live as people chosen and called by God.