

TO HELP YOU NAIL DOWN TRUTHS IN THE BIBLE

One of our goals here at Bethlehem is for you to spend time with God daily - this **HAMMERTIME** Card can help. It is designed to help you spend 15 minutes (or more) with God, 4 days a week. Here is an example of how to use this card. Study notebooks are available in the Bethlehem lobby.

Read the Bible verses (4 min)

- Read through one time, then re-read and underline any key points.

Read the card/think about it/write in your notebook (6 min)

- Write down some of the main ideas from the passage.
- Write down a “key for me” that is your main point that day.

Pray (5 min)

- Write down some of the things you are praying about that day.

“The Transformed Life”

A study about the Apostle Paul

You have **several options for tools to use during this study** (approx. 12 weeks):

- ♦ **HAMMERTIME Cards** - available Sundays at Bethlehem Church or online at www.bethlehemtoolbox.com.
- ♦ **Study Notebooks** - available at ‘Above the Grind’ Bookstore or the Information Center, \$5.00
- ♦ **“Paul: Living for the Call of Christ”**, by Gene Getz. Available at ‘Above the Grind’ Bookstore or you can purchase at Lifeway/Amazon/etc.
- ♦ Contact Matt Vanderbilt, Pastor of Connections at mvanderbilt@bethlehembc.com or 704.823.5050 x104, for additional information.

Day 1: Change of a Lifetime **Read:** Acts 9:1-9; Romans 3:23 & 6:23; 2 Peter 3:9

Think about: Paul underwent the most radical change in the history of Christianity. As you read the story of Paul’s conversion to a Christ-follower, you see that he went from being a murderer to a missionary. Complete transformation is God’s desire for you. God can still use you - no matter what you did before coming to Christ.

As you read through today’s verses, think about the simple process of accepting Christ: Admitting you are a sinner, Believing that Jesus died for your sins and is the only way to heaven, Choosing to live for Him the rest of your life. God offers every person this incredible gift - that is why it is called ‘accepting’ Christ. Each human being must decide for themselves (like Paul did) to accept this free gift. After that, your life begins to transform. Like Paul, it can be a complete life-change that allows God to work through you to impact others for Christ.

Act: In your notebook, write down some details about how you changed when you became a Christian. Even if you can’t remember the exact details of the day when you accepted Christ, write down changes that you have seen in your life and the difference that Jesus makes in you now.

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Day 2: Why baptism? **Read:** Acts 9:18 & 16:33; Matthew 3:13-17

Think about: Have you been baptized? As you can see in Acts 9, after Paul accepted Christ, he was immediately baptized. You can see this obedience again in Acts 16 with the jailer who became a Christian. This act of obedience was first modeled by Jesus Himself in the Matthew verses. Jesus gives us the specific command to be baptized in Matthew 28:19 - to (1) make disciples and then (2) baptize them.

Why do we do this? Baptism is an outward symbol of an inner commitment - it is your chance to publicly declare your devotion to the Son of God. Baptism by immersion is a great picture of the death & burial of Christ (when you go underwater) and His victorious rising from the dead (lifted out of the water).

Act: Think about what baptism really means so that you understand it and you can explain it to others. If you have not been baptized, watch the Sunday Worship Guide for the next available date and plan to be a part of the baptism service!

Day 3: Alive and kicking **Read:** Acts 26:2, 12-18; Romans 8:5-9

Think about: God uses the Holy Spirit to prompt us, to spur us, and even to jolt us into action at times. This is what Paul is talking about in his testimony before King Agrippa. This term 'kick against the goads' comes from farmers using a sharp pointed stick (a 'goad') to prod cattle and keep them moving. The cattle would experience even more discomfort if they kicked against that prodding, rather than submitting to it.

It is the same with God's Spirit. He prods you to motivate you, redirect you or sometimes even to discipline you. God wants you to set your mind on what His Spirit desires and to allow yourself to be controlled by Him. He knows what is best for you - follow His leadings, don't kick against them!

Act: Write your main thoughts from today in your notebook and include your key for me' - your main application point of the day.

Day 4: Saved by grace **Read:** Ephesians 2:8-10

Think about: To wrap up this week's look at the conversion of Paul, read through today's verses and think about the concept that Paul later wrote about to the new believers at the church in Ephesus. They were confused! There were conflicting discussions occurring regarding the criteria for salvation, i.e., works, certain phrases, acts, offerings, various rules, etc. Paul makes it crystal clear to them - only one thing can save a person - grace through Christ. If it had anything to do with you, it would give *you* something to boast about. But with salvation, there is only one person to boast about...our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Make sure you have this idea 'nailed down' in your mind - that you did nothing to earn your way to heaven. Salvation: It is a free gift, from God to you, never to be taken away.

Act: Read and re-read these verses. Write down your main thoughts about them. Talk with God about them, internalize the concept, and memorize the verses so you can always tell others about being saved by grace.

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