

Boundless

You Need a Bigger Mission (July 26th, 2020)

PREPARATION

- Familiarize yourself with this Study Guide.
- If you missed it, watch the sermon online [HERE](#).
- Spend some time in prayer before your group gathers.
- You **always** have the option to use some or all the questions and/or prepare your own questions.
- Review the learning objective to focus the conversation, read the primary scriptures as a group, summarize the main points, ask the questions, and use supporting texts to enhance the concepts.

DISCUSSION

Opening Prayer: (1-2 minutes)

In light of what God is saying through this week's message, here's a suggestion of how your group can invite God into your time together.

Thank the Father for being the God who is infinitely large, yet tangibly existent and immanent in our every-day lives! Pray that as we navigate the chaotic waters of our cultural moment that we would humbly listen and obey God's voice. Pray that the Father would fill us with His Holy Spirit and give us the words to speak in our daily lives as we interact with the people in our social circles. Finally, pray that we would continue to learn how supreme your authority is and how to submit to your word as we await your coming kingdom!

Discussion: (45-60 minutes)

What's Going on This Week

This Sunday, Pastor Larry led us into the fifth week of our *Boundless* series. Pastor Larry highlights the story of Saul's conversion to Paul in Acts 9:1-19 in order to highlight the boundless nature of God's plan for our lives. Pastor Larry focusses on Saul's immediate conversion experience, Ananias' hesitation upon meeting the newly converted Paul, and God's expectation for Paul to outline what it looks like for God to transform our lives and step into His boundless purpose for us even though we may have apprehensions. Pastor Larry challenges us that even though we are promised to experience suffering as a part of God's plans, following Jesus will be worth it no matter what it costs.

“When we see how big God is, suddenly our plans don't seem big enough.” – Pastor Larry Vold

Suggested Questions

Check-In: *Icebreaker* – Share a time in your life when you have needed to be bold!

Study Tip: This week, we look at Saul (Jewish name) who was miraculously converted to Paul (Greco-Roman name). In one of his letters, Paul describes his former self as, “of the people of Israel, *of the tribe of Benjamin*, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.” (Phm. 3:5). The story of the tribe Benjamin begins with Jacob falling in love with Rachel and valuing her children, Joseph and Benjamin. While we see God’s sovereignty through Joseph and his sons, the story of the Benjamin is not quite as clear after. As Israel blesses his sons, Benjamin is described as, “a ravenous wolf, in the morning devouring the prey and at evening dividing the spoil.” (Gen. 49:27). As prescribed, the tribe of Benjamin were known for their aggression and passion. In their healthy state, this tribe became warriors and leaders on behalf of the Lord’s chosen people (Jdgs. 20:13-16; 2 Sam. 4:2; 1 Chr. 12:1-2). When their aggression fell outside of God’s will, they became responsible for lewd decision and grotesque actions (Num. 13; Jdg. 19—21). This can be personified in one of the most prominent Benjaminites: King Saul. King Saul was a well-built powerful figure who conquered and built up the nation of Israel. He also became unhinged when he made rash vows, unauthorized sacrifices, and hunted the anointed king David (1 Sam. 8—15). Similarly, the Saul of Acts 6-9 was a Benjamite who was passionate about the Jewish law but also murdered those who he felt had tainted the law of the Jews. **How could he be transformed?** The other prominent Benjamite character is Mordecai! Mordecai plays a crucial role in the story of Esther and the salvation of the Jews by boldly stepping into his role as the uncle of the Queen and advocating for his people. Just like Mordecai, Paul boldly steps into God’s to spread the gospel of Jesus! Paul puts on his armor, fights the good fight, he competes to finish the race, and just like Mordecai, God elevates him to one of the most influential characters in His redemptive story (Eph. 6:10-18; 1 Tim. 4:7-8). As you meditate on this study guide, reflect on your passions and boldly step into God’s purpose so that God may bless you and bless all people through you!

Objective #1: Explore Saul’s transformation and compare the phases of transformation in your life.

Primary Texts: Acts 9:1-9, 18-19 – Pastor Larry begins by pointing out three different phases of Saul’s conversion experience. The first *disruption phase* occurs when something immediate and suddenly changes in life. The second *discovery phase* occurs when we begin to ask difficult questions about our worldview and do some soul-searching. Finally, the third *discipleship phase* happens when we begin to explore what our God given purpose is! Can you identify each phase in your life? Share with the group how each phase has impacted you and/or which phase you are in! How have these categories challenged what you have planned for your life?

Objective #2: Explore Ananias’ involvement in Saul’s conversion and reflect on your own apprehensions.

Primary Texts: Acts 9:10-15a, 17 – Next, Pastor Larry points to Ananias and his well-founded apprehensions towards getting involved with Saul’s conversion experience. He points out that apprehensions are normal for all of us, but if we want to be a part of God’s big plan that He has for us, we must learn to obey God and let Him lead us. What are some of the most common doubts or apprehensions that you have experienced when it comes to listening and obeying God’s commands? What is God calling you to do during this current season?

Supporting Texts: (Apprehension) Jonah 1:1-16; (Encouragement) Romans 10:8-17 / Is. 52:7-12; 2 Tim. 4:1-8; Col. 3:1-17

Objective #3: Read God’s expectation for Paul’s new life and meditate on your God-given purpose!

Primary Texts: Acts 9:15-16 – Pastor Larry concludes with our misconception that God’s plans are about Him doing something for us. He points out that while the Bible says much about God’s blessings for us, the main purpose of His blessing is so that He might be able to bless the nations through us. This purpose will include suffering on our part. What are some ideas that come to mind so that you can be a blessing others? What apprehensions do you have and how can we pray for you to take your first step into your God-given purpose?

Supporting Texts: (Blessing to the Nations) Gen. 12:1-3, Matt. 28:18-20, Jn. 20:19-21, Acts 1:8 (Our Role) 2 Tim. 3:10-17, 4:6-8, Matt. 24:3-14, Rom. 8:18, 2 Cor. 4:16-18

Closing Prayer: (5-10 minutes)

In light of what God is saying through this week's message, here's some suggestions of what your group could talk about with God in prayer.

Thank our Heavenly Father for revealing Himself to us in the person of Jesus! Ask that the Holy Spirit would continue to teach us how to live and love like Jesus in situations like the one we face today. Finally, pray that we as a church would develop a boundless understanding of you, our Heavenly Father, so that we could rest in the assurance that you are in control of all things, whether good or bad!

THROUGHOUT THE WEEK

-Stay up to date with Coronavirus Ministry Opportunities: Help us out by pointing the people in your Community Group to [3Crosses.org/coronavirus](https://3crosses.org/coronavirus) . If you or anyone in your group is looking to serve food in our pantry, access spiritual care, or seek financial assistance, you can find all you need at [3Crosses.org/neighborhood](https://3crosses.org/neighborhood)

- Find out how to pray for two people in your group this week! Pray that the members of your group would rest knowing that Jesus is on the throne and that He is working to reconcile all things back to Himself!

-Community Group Fall 2020: We will be launching a new Community Group Season starting August 23rd, 2020! For more information about joining a group, leading a group, or general inquiries, contact AJ at avanegas@3crosses.org