

## Small Group Discussion Guide — April 24, 2022

- Series: Before and After
  - Sermon: Take Heart!
  - Scripture: Acts 9: 1-9
- 

### **FOLLOW-UP FROM LAST WEEK**

How did living in a “resurrection saturated world” feel to you this week? Describe those moments when it was most apparent to you. What were the moments when it was harder to recognize?

### **CONNECT**

1. What stood out to you from this past week’s service, and why?
2. Describe an event after which you saw the world, and your role in it, in a fundamentally different way. Graduating from school, perhaps, or seeing the ocean for the first time? Maybe the birth of a child? What was it about that moment that changed you, what parts of you changed, and how did they change?

### **ENGAGE**

1. Read Acts 9:1-9
  - Consider how Saul went to the Chief Priest seeking authority to persecute believers. Why do you think he asked them? What might this suggest about his intentions or motivations?
  - Consider Saul’s immediate response to flash of light and to the voice. According to his response, what does Paul understand in that moment? What information is he still missing, which Jesus then supplies? What do Paul’s actions reveal about the state of his heart at that moment?
  - What do you make of the fact that Saul was struck blind in the encounter? Why might God have chosen this temporary condition for Saul?

### **APPLY**

1. To what authorities do you submit in your daily life? How might this submission blind you to Jesus as He is, or prevent you from recognizing His voice when he speaks to you? How do things change when you receive God’s gift of life?
2. Think about your life before coming to faith in Christ. What were some false promises of freedom that you chased? What happened in your story that helped you see Christ and His offer of salvation and redemption? What were some things that immediately changed for you? What are things that have taken time to develop and more fully surrender to Him?

3. David outlined three layers of full conversion:

- Conversion to Christ - surrendering your heart and will
- Conversion to the body of Christ - new life-giving relationships
- Conversion to the work of Christ - new purpose, new vision

Out of these three areas, where do you need God to lead you deeper? What are some steps you can take this week to surrender to Him in this way?

### **PRAYER**

Our Lord, May your name be revered and your glory abound. We ask for the new life that only you can give. That you give us new eyes so that we might begin to see you ever more clearly. That you give us new ears, with which to hear your voice and discern your song among the noise of the world. That you will give us new hearts, that we might love you fully and submit completely to the authority of your kingdom. That the newness of our lives will be clear to all who see us, to your glory, and only to your glory. Amen.

### **GOING DEEPER**

Galatians 2: 20 says, "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me." Scripture teaches us that, in Christ, we are a completely new creation. Using the list below, what are some specific examples of each that you see in your life as a believer? Where is there room for growth to be more like Christ?

New Identity  
New Direction  
New Hope  
New Purpose

New Values  
New Goals  
New Gratitude  
New Joy

### **ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE**

2 Corinthians 4:4  
2 Corinthians 3:15-17  
Galatians 2:20  
Acts 26:13-14  
Colossians 1:27

### **QUOTATIONS**

"True freedom is never found in putting yourself at the center, with your choices and behavior shaped by your allegiance to you. Real freedom is only ever found when God's grace liberates you to live for One infinitely greater than you."

*Paul Tripp*

"A proud person is always looking down on things and people; and as long as you are looking down you cannot see something above you."

*C.S. Lewis*

"The conversion of a soul is the miracle of a moment, the manufacture of a saint is the task of a lifetime."

*Alan Redpath*