

JESUS & THE DEATH OF A KILLER

ACTS 7-9

MAIN TAKEAWAY

Saul's life was marked by death—by the kind he *caused* and *embraced*. Like the Apostle Paul, Jesus wants us to put our sinful nature to death and raise us to new life in Christ.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

What is the meaning of the Latin phrase “Memento Mori”? In contrast to people who won't admit to getting older, why is this important to remember?

In what way is it biblical to think about death (James 4:14; Psalm 90:12)? How does this make you think about the *new life* (2 Corinthians 5:17), *abundant life* (John 10:10), and *eternal life* in Christ (Romans 5:21)?

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ACTS 7:57-8:4

***A Man of Death.* Saul was a man of death (Acts 26:11), but Jesus saw a future Apostle and bold witness—Jesus saw Paul. How does Saul's conversion illustrate that nobody is beyond the reach of God (Galatians 1:11-16)?**

Saul was sincere, yet sincerely wrong. In trying to please God, what did Saul depend on? Why is this wrong? What is the truth (Ephesians 2:8-9)?

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ACTS 9:1–5

A Man Who Had to Die. Saul was a man of death, but Jesus was calling him to put that life to death so that he might truly live. How does Paul describe the death of his old life (Philippians 3:4–11)? What did he lose and gain?

Jesus didn't just reform Saul; He replaced him, and *Saul* became *Paul*. How did he receive a new identity (Galatians 2:20)?

Pastor Jonathan explained, "Jesus didn't come to make bad people good; He came to make dead people live." Why is this distinction important to communicate to people who think they are good and moral (Ephesians 2:1–5)?

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ROMANS 8:13–18

A Man Who Died Daily. Paul didn't just have a Damascus road *moment*, but a Damascus road *mindset*. Why is the Christian life a daily burial of the old self (1 Corinthians 15:31)? How do you think Paul did this? How do you?

Pastor Jonathan explained, "Jesus called Paul to die to himself, not to be better, but to be resurrected—to be a whole new type of person." How is conversion to Christ described (John 3:3; 2 Corinthians 5:17)? How does this reveal God's power and plans?

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

No one is beyond the reach of God. How does this message encourage you to pray for those who are far from God? Share an example of a surprising conversion to Christ.

Jesus came to make you new. Pastor Jonathan explained, "Everything else pales in comparison to the supremacy of a relationship with God through Jesus Christ." How have you experienced death to sin and life in Christ?

Like Paul, how do you live out your new identity in Christ daily?

PRAYER

Give thanks for your new life and identity in Christ. Pray for perspective as you put sin to death and live by the Spirit. Pray for those who are far from God, knowing that no one is beyond His reach.