[**New Study: Friends Of Paul**](https://lakeshorebiblestudy.com/2020/05/19/new-study-friends-of-paul/)

This week we begin a new study which will take place online and with a video review on Wednesday nights. The study is called **Friends Of Paul**.

What’s it all about? In **Acts 9** we read about the conversion of Saul (later called Paul). Read Acts 9:1-31 and consider **how his decision to become a Christian would have isolated him from all of his past religious associations and create new relationships with their own unique challenges**. In the coming lessons we will think about those challenges and about some of the people who became his friends and supported him.

If we remember the story, Paul was going to Damascus to persecute Christians when Jesus appeared to him. After being baptized and recuperating from seeing Jesus, being blinded and fasting, the text says “Immediately he preached the Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God” (9:20). He had come to Damascus to arrest Christians and instead he is telling the Jews in Damascus that Jesus is the Christ!

Having decided to follow Jesus he suddenly became alienated from his Jewish friends who would consider that he had deserted the faith.

His new allies spiritually were people that he recently had been determined to put to death! Both Acts 9:13-14 and 9:36 illustrate this reluctance to receive him.

QUESTIONS:

How did the Jews receive Saul, now the preacher of Jesus? (Acts 9:23, 29)

How did the Christians in Jerusalem receive their new brother? (26)

In addition to fearing whether or not they could trust him, what other attitudes might they have had towards Saul?

Saul was such a polarizing figure early in his Christian life. What decision was finally made concerning him? (28-30) Why might this have been a good place for him to settle for a while?

To a lesser extent, anyone who becomes a Christian will see old relationships change and experience new relationships with their own challenges. What does the song “I Have Decided To Follow Jesus” say about that?

“Saul was a polarizing figure”. How might verse 31 illustrate that?

When you think about “friends of Paul”, who comes to mind? Please don’t say John, George, and Ringo!