

## PREPARING AT HOME

September 9-15, 2019

*Focus reading:* 1 Timothy 1:12–17 (<http://bible.oremus.org/?ql=432882734>)

*Other lectionary readings:* Jeremiah 4:11–12, 22–28; Psalm 14; Luke 15:1–10

*Theme:* Growing in God's Love

The “I” in this week’s Bible reading is the Apostle Paul; yet, scholars agree that Paul did not write the words himself. The letter written to Timothy, who once worked with Paul, bears signs of being written by someone other than Paul who nonetheless claims his name and voice. This was a common practice that bestowed a teacher’s authority on those who applied his teachings to new situations. Just as Jesus’ stories are re-told by others, so the story of Paul’s conversion is offered here as an example to those who are trying to live as followers of Jesus. The aim in telling Paul’s story, however, is not to lift up a hero in the faith and inspire others to do great things (to “Be like Paul”). Rather, the aim of the story is to point to Christ, not Paul. It is Christ who initiated his relationship with Paul. It is Christ who forgave his sin and showed mercy. It is Christ who redeemed him. It is Christ who transformed him and worked through him to change the world. This story affirms the power of mercy and offers hope to those who struggle with the challenges of living faithfully. Knowing what Christ can do through someone who was as lost as Paul, what can he do through you? It is a story that offers encouragement, but not by saying, “You got this.” Instead, the story reassures us that no matter how badly we mess up, “God’s got this!”

### THE STORY OF PAUL/SAUL

This passage assumes that one knows the story of Saul’s transformation to Paul. Share the full story as found in Acts 9:1-22 with your child. Provide art supplies and two sheets of paper per person. On one page, show how you picture Saul and on another how you picture Paul. Talk about his transformation. What can we learn from that transformation?

### A LONG LINE OF TEACHERS

Jesus taught Paul; Paul taught Timothy; Timothy would teach others. Who has taught and is teaching you the stories of faith? Who can you teach? This Sunday is the first day of classes in our new program year. Be sure the whole family is involved in sharing stories in ConnectEd!

### PRAYER

Loving God,  
Thank you for forgiving us  
When we disappoint you and never giving up on us.  
Thank you for people who tell us stories of faith,  
teaching us, encouraging us,  
and showing us all that you make possible in our lives.  
Help us to share our stories with others.  
Amen.

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