

Immerse week 2: Acts
Title: Immerse: Acts
Scripture Reading: Acts 9:1-19
Discussion Questions

1. This is the second week of our whole church New Testament Bible Reading Plan called Immerse. If you haven't started yet, it's not too late to join, grab a bookmark from the church Foyer and start reading along. If you have been reading this week what is one thing that stood out to you as you read? What was it like to read such a large chunk of scripture in one week?
2. In the beginning of the book of Acts Paul was one of the biggest challenges for the very young church. Paul was a Pharisee, and a very devoted one at that. He personally headed up the persecution of the church, so much so that we read in Acts 8:3 "*But Paul began to destroy the church. Going from house to house, he dragged off both men and women and put them in prison.*" Most of us will never experience this type of persecution during our lives as followers of Christ, but with that said what have been some of the challenges to being a follower of Christ in your life. Have you had any resentment or pushback from friends or family members because of your faith?
3. Paul's encounter with the risen Jesus on the road to Damascus is recorded twice in the book of Acts. Once in Acts chapter 9:1-19, and again in Paul's own words in Acts 26:12-18. In Acts 26 after Paul was knocked to the ground, he heard Jesus's voice saying: "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads." Jesus clearly got Paul's attention. Have you ever had a time in your life where God got your attention? What was going on in your life? What was God trying to teach you?
4. This phrase "kicking against the goads" was an agricultural reference. A goad was a tool that helped the farmers of Jesus's day direct their oxen what direction to go. Because it hurt some, the oxen would sometimes kick against the goad. The conclusion here is that Jesus had been goading Saul for a while now, trying to get him to stop what he had been doing. It wasn't until he was struck blind that he realized that he had been blind to the will of God this whole time. Think about this in your own life, has there ever been a direction God was trying to get you to go but you were too blind to be able to see it? How did God finally get your attention? What was it like to realize that God was trying to get you to go on a different path all along, but you just couldn't see it?