

in FOCUS

"FOCUS ON LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT"

January 17, 2010
Mark 4:1-20 (ESV)
LifeGroup Study

MY STORY

1. How do you prefer to offer constructive criticism to others? Do you typically wait for someone to ask for it or not? Why?
2. Do you prefer that people shoot straight with you or carefully temper their words? Why?
3. Who has had the biggest, positive impact on you? Explain.

DIGGING DEEPER

"A Case Study of the Life of Paul"

Someone once said, "People change with time, but not all changes are good." Paul is a great example of a life that underwent amazing transformation. However, as we will discover in our study this week, there was more to his transformation than just his resolve to change and his relationship with Christ. So, let's begin by going back to where his journey to maturity and influence began:

1. Read Acts 7:58 (Note: Saul is Paul's former name), 9:1-2. If you had met Paul during his early days prior to his conversion, what words would you have used to describe him to others and why?
2. Read Acts 9:3-9, what is this passage about? Why is this event important?
3. Read Acts 9:10-21 and answer the following questions:
 - How was Paul's sight restored?
 - Who was Ananias and what role did he play in Paul's journey to transformation?
 - What risk did Ananias have to take and what was his struggle? What risks can you anticipate or assume in speaking into others' lives?
 - What can we learn about speaking into others' lives from this account of God's using Ananias in Paul's life?

3. Paul's transformation did not happen in a vacuum. Instead, God used his relationships with others to bring him to a full maturity in Christ. In turn, Paul leveraged his relationship with others to help others mature in Christ.

Please read the following passages and describe the relational dynamics Paul experienced with each person in the passage (who's doing what for whom):

- Acts 9:26,27; Acts 11:25-26 _____
(Barnabas)
- 1 Timothy 1:2, 2 Timothy 2:2 _____
(Timothy)

TAKING IT HOME

Three People You Need in Your Life: a Paul, a Barnabas, and a Timothy.

"**A Paul** is an older person who is willing to mentor you, to build into your life. Not someone who's smarter or more gifted than you, but somebody who's been down the road. Somebody willing to share their strengths and weaknesses — everything they have learned in the laboratory of life. Somebody whose faith you'll want to imitate.

A Barnabas is a soul friend, somebody who loves you but is not impressed by you. Somebody to whom you can be accountable. Somebody who's willing to keep you honest, who's willing to say, "Hey, you're neglecting your spouse, and don't give me any guff!"

A Timothy is a younger person into whose life you are building. For a model, read 1st and 2nd Timothy. Here was Paul, the quintessential mentor, building into the life of his protégé — affirming, encouraging, teaching, correcting, directing, praying."

Excerpt from a book Men of Integrity by Howard Hendricks

1. Of the three types of people you need, whom do you already have? Whom do you need to seek out and enlist for your spiritual growth and maturity in life?
2. LifeGroup can be a great place to practice being a Barnabas to one another. Based on your responses to the first 2 questions in the MY STORY section, how can people in your group best speak into your life? Please be clear, honest, and concrete!
3. Please continue to share your Life Journal in your weekly LifeGroup. Suggestion: Take turn sharing your Life Journal each week.

