

# **God uses people**

**'suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him'**

**Saul's vision - a supernatural event**

**Saul's conversion – three courageous witnesses**

# God uses people

## Witness 1: Stephen

**“Lord, do not hold this sin against them.”** Acts 7.59-8.1

**As he was dying, Stephen prayed, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.”** Acts 7.59-8.1

**Stephen’s prayer, like Jesus’ on the cross:** Luke 23.34

**“Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”**

# God uses people

**God uses our testimony, and listens to our prayers:**

- **in Paul's conscience: 'Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners – of whom I am the worst.' (1Tim.1.16) 'I do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. (1Cor.15.9)**
- **in Paul's teaching: 'If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.' (Romans 12.20, quoting Proverbs 25.21-22)**

# God uses people

## Application 1

- Like Paul, are there things in my past that I cannot forget, and cannot forgive myself for?

## Application 2

- Like Stephen, do I forgive and pray even for those who have cruelly abused me in the past?

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## Witness 2: Ananias

**“Lord, I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done ...”**

**Acts 9.13**

**“Lord, I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done ...”**

**“Go! This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles ...”**

**“Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus has sent me ...”**

**Acts 9.13,15,17**

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## Application 3

- Like Ananias, am I listening to Christ's command, and willing to take risks in presenting the Gospel, even in difficult and maybe dangerous circumstances?

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## Witness 3: Barnabas

**‘... they were all afraid of him, not believing that he really was a disciple.’**

Acts 9.26

**‘... they were all afraid of him, not believing that he really was a disciple. But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles.’**

Acts 9.26-27

**Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means ‘son of encouragement’)**

Acts 4.36

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## Application 4

- **Like Barnabas, do I make a practice of encouraging people and welcoming them into Christian fellowship?**

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## Three people God used:

- martyr
- brother
- Encourager

## Four Applications

- Like Paul, are there things in my past that I cannot forget, and cannot forgive myself for?
- Like Stephen, do I forgive and pray even for those who have cruelly abused me in the past?
- Like Ananias, am I listening to Christ's command, and willing to take risks in presenting the Gospel, even in difficult and maybe dangerous circumstances?
- Like Barnabas, do I make a practice of encouraging people and welcoming them into Christian fellowship?