



AN ENEMY TURNED FRIEND

(based on Acts 9:1-6, (7-20))

Begin the story by pacing back and forth with Saul to underscore his frustration and anger.

Saul paced back and forth, back and forth as he waited to see the high priest. "I want to get rid of those followers of Jesus," he muttered under his breath. "These people of the Way will destroy the true faith if they aren't stopped!"

When the high priest entered, Saul stood still, but he was fuming inside. "What brings you here, Saul?" asked the high priest.

"I want to go to Damascus to bring back the followers of Jesus. I want to round up the men and women who preach that Jesus is the one sent from God. Would you give me letters of introduction to the synagogues in Damascus?"

Soon Saul was on his way to Damascus, a city where many of Jesus' followers had fled. Assuming that he would have many people to bring back to be tried in Jerusalem, Saul had men with him. As they were going along, a bright light flashed from the sky. Saul fell to the ground. "Saul, Saul, why do you want to treat me so badly?"

"Who are you?" asked Saul.

"I am Jesus, the one you want to hunt down and get rid of. Now get up and go into the city. You will be told what to do when you get there."

The men with Saul didn't know what to say. They heard the voice too, but who was speaking?

Saul struggled to get up. His eyes were open, but he couldn't see. His friends led him by the hand into Damascus. For three days, Saul could not see and did not eat or drink anything.

In Damascus lived Ananias, a follower of Jesus. In a vision, God told Ananias to go to the house where Saul was. But Ananias had heard about Saul and how Saul was hunting down followers of Jesus, people of the Way. Going to Saul did not sound like a good idea to Ananias. Ananias was afraid, but obeyed God.

When Ananias got to Saul, he laid his hands on Saul. Immediately, Saul could see again. Ananias baptized Saul. Then Saul ate, because he was weak from hunger. It took some talking for Ananias to convince the other followers of Jesus in Damascus that it was safe for Saul to come to them. But when Saul did, he stayed with them for some time. Saul, their enemy, was now Saul, their new friend and another follower of Jesus, one of the people of the Way.