



# **FEEDING 5,000**

**STORYTELLING  
WORKSHOP**



# OVERVIEW



## SCRIPTURE

Acts 9



## CONNECTION

Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus is similar to Dan West's transformation while handing out cups of milk to people suffering from the aftermath of the Spanish Civil War. The two men experienced spiritual transformations that changed the direction of their lives. Paul went on to build the international church through his testimony about Jesus. Dan West went on to build an international organization that helps the poor become self-reliant. They both acted on their faith to bring God's Kingdom to the Earth.



## MAIN IDEAS

- Dan West founded Heifer with the concept "Not a cup, but a cow"
- Paul was transformed by an encounter with Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus and became a builder of the church
- Heifer supports poor families with animals, resources and training to help end hunger and poverty.



## HIGHLIGHTS

- Dan West will tell his story about founding Heifer
- Complete Bible study about Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus



## SUPPLIES

- Bibles
- Maps of Paul's journeys, either in the Bibles or as a poster
- Heifer's [Where We Work map](#)
- Dan West storyteller: props



## ADVANCE PREPARATION

- The storyteller playing Dan West should review [Heifer.org](#).
- Put up the maps of Paul's journeys and Heifer's Where We Work map

# LESSON

Enact the storytelling of Dan West by reading the script on Page 4.

## PAUL'S CONVERSION

The Bible is split into two parts: the Old Testament, or Hebrew Scriptures, and the New Testament. The Old Testament tells the story about the relationship between God and the people of Israel. The New Testament tells the story of Jesus Christ and the early church. The New Testament begins with the four Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. These tell the story about Jesus Christ from his miraculous birth through his crucifixion and resurrection. The Book of Acts and the Epistles tell the story of the early church. We are looking in the Book of Acts for the story about how Saul became Paul.

- Pass out the Bibles. Instruct the class to open to Acts 9.
- Look at the Epistles. These are letters to all of the new churches that Paul established. He wrote to them often, offering counsel and advice.
- Look at Paul's journeys. He traveled around the Mediterranean Sea three times, visiting the churches that he established.
- Using the maps, compare the travels of Paul as he established the early church and Heifer's presence around the world.

## DISCUSSION

How are Paul and Dan West alike?

- They both had a transforming moment that redirected their lives.
- They both responded to God's call.
- They both started a movement that worked locally and thought globally.

In Matthew 25:34-40, Jesus told us how we should treat each other.

Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

The righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'

The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

Discuss how each person can be awakened to a life of service both to Jesus and to humankind.

## DAN WEST'S SCRIPT

(This YouTube video [here](#) may be a helpful tool for older students. Also, we recommend [Faith the Cow](#) by Susan Bame Hoover for younger students.

If your congregation doesn't have someone to play the role of Dan West, the text may be read aloud.)

Hi, my name is Dan West. I lived from 1893 to 1972. Something happened to me in 1937 that changed my life. That transformation has currently helped 31 million families lift themselves out of hunger and poverty. I learned early on about the importance of reading the Bible and following Jesus. That has a way of directing your life into serving your neighbors, whether they live across the street from you or on the other side of the planet.

When I was 44 years old, I worked in Spain as a volunteer relief worker with the American Friends Service. Spain had just ended a nasty civil war. Many people were displaced from their homes, so they had no jobs or businesses, and there was no way to make a living. They needed everything: food, clothes, shoes, shelter.

As part of the relief effort, my role was to hand out cups of milk. Day after day, I handed out cups of milk to the same people. This was helping them in the here and now, but it wasn't helping them get back on their feet, supporting themselves with the dignity of work. I struggled with knowing what I could do to help them in the future.

The most difficult part of my daily routine was drinking my quart of milk, knowing a child would starve who didn't have it. In fact, the thought so deeply affected me that I came up with a response to people who invited me to have dessert. "I will not have cake as long as there are those in the world who don't have bread to eat."

As a farmer from northern Indiana, I looked out at the grassy fields and pastures that dotted the landscape of Spain. Then, I had an idea. When I got back home to Indiana, I went to my fellow Christian farmers. I told them that what the people of Spain needed were cows. With their own cows, they could get much needed nourishment and income from selling the milk. Young female cows are called heifers. I started to say, "Not a cup, but a cow." Virgil Mock was the first person to donate, and he gave three cows named Faith, Hope and Charity.

It has been an amazing journey. At the heart of helping the poor become self-reliant, I have been trying to carry out Christ's message. The heart of the gospel is to meet basic human needs, to advocate justice for the oppressed and to actively be a peacemaker. I was trying to convince people who were already Christian to follow Christ more faithfully, to identify with vulnerable families and to take up the cause of the common people of society. Read the Bible and follow Jesus. I wanted to be part of the Kingdom of God that Jesus preached about. I wanted to help bring that kingdom to Earth. How will you follow Jesus? What can you do with Heifer? What part will you play in making this world a better place?

## **FUNDRAISING OPPORTUNITIES**

If participating in a Living Gift Market, create a booth about Heifer bees. Invite a local beekeeper to bring in an empty hive and share why he or she got into beekeeping, how a beekeeper raises bees and how the honey is harvested. Perhaps the local honey could be sold with an extra \$1 added to the price of each container going to Heifer bees.

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

Dear Lord, please awaken in our hearts a new sense that we can make a difference in someone else's quality of life. Lord, you put role models in our path to show us the way. Please shine your light in the direction you want us to go. Amen.