

## The Mission Has a Cost

### Small Group Guide

**Warm-up Question:** (Choose one, make up your own, or skip this part all together, depending upon the nature of your group.)

1. What's the most expensive purchase you have ever made?
2. Do you generally make decisions slowly or quickly? Explain.

**Read the following passage:** Acts 9:1-16.

Jesus called Saul to a great mission, but that mission had a cost. Jesus told Ananias, "I will show him (i.e. Saul) how much he must suffer for my name." Although the apostle Paul's letters are filled with life and hope, they also demonstrate some of the ways that Paul suffered for the mission. His weaknesses were exposed. He agonized over the well-being of the people in his churches. Sometimes he experienced violent persecution. God has a great mission for us, but this mission has a cost.

**Questions for Discussion** (Choose several that are relevant for your group):

1. Do you think there is a cost to following Jesus? Explain.
2. Read 2 Corinthians 4:7; 12:6-10. What are some of the reasons God might expose our weaknesses as we engage his mission? What might this look like in your own life?
3. Consider the following quote from a book by C.S. Lewis.

*"To love at all is to be vulnerable. Love anything and your heart will be wrung and possibly broken. If you want to make sure of keeping it intact you must give it to no one, not even an animal. Wrap it carefully round with hobbies and little luxuries; avoid all entanglements. Lock it up safe in the casket or coffin of your selfishness. But in that casket, safe, dark, motionless, airless, it will change. It will not be broken; it will become unbreakable, impenetrable, irredeemable. To love is to be vulnerable."*

C.S. Lewis, *The Four Loves*

Do you ever keep others at arm's length in order to protect yourself from getting hurt? Explain. What is the risk in living this way?

4. How well do you empathize with others? Explain.
5. People sometimes reacted violently when Paul preached the Gospel. Why do you think they reacted this way? What are some reasons people might strongly resist the Gospel today? What should we do about this?

6. To what extent are you embracing the mission of taking the life of Jesus everywhere? Explain. What might it cost you to embrace Jesus' mission of making disciples? Are you willing to pay the price? Explain.

**Pray**