

Focus Points

"Focus Points" are short activities that draw students into the lesson. They take only a few minutes to do. Many can be used as quick-start activities to engage the students and focus their attention at the beginning of class. Others may fit well during the lesson to reinforce a point and drive it home. Still others may serve as good wrap-up activities. "Focus Points" come in many forms. Choose and use them as you see fit.

Focus Point – Saul: Changing His Mind!

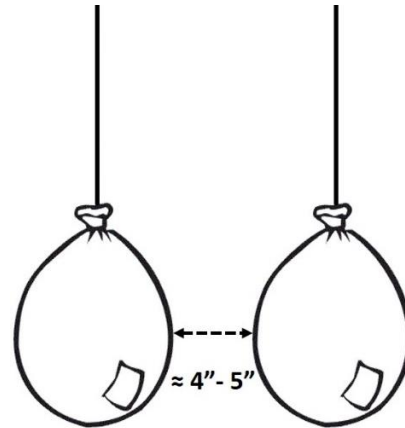
Acts 26:9-11 "I myself was convinced that I ought to do many things in opposing the name of Jesus of Nazareth. And I did so in Jerusalem. I not only locked up many of the saints in prison after receiving authority from the chief priests, but when they were put to death I cast my vote against them. And I punished them often in all the synagogues and tried to make them blaspheme, and in raging fury against them I persecuted them even to foreign cities."

The Apostle Paul

Here is a counterintuitive activity that shows how it is possible to be convinced about something, *and be wrong*. It also shows that we need to change our minds when evidence gives us a good reason to do so.

Hang two inflated party balloons from strings so that they are about four or five inches apart. Ask your students to predict what will happen when you blow air *between* the hanging balloons. Will the balloons fly apart? Will they come together? Or will they do something else?

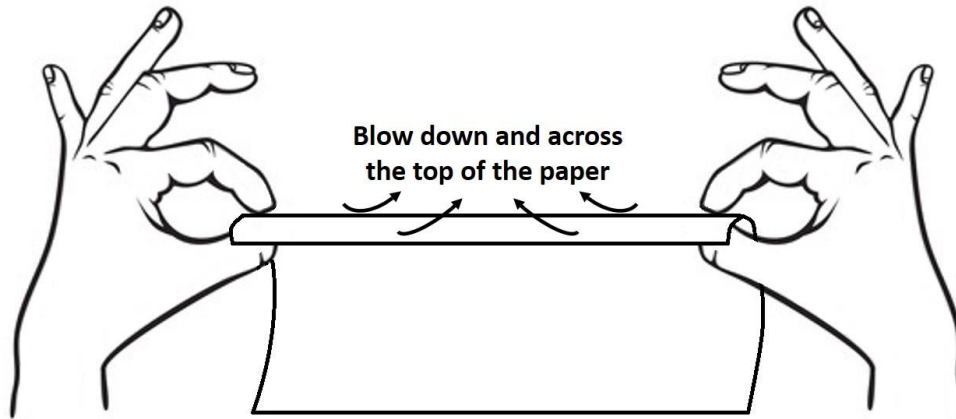
People often think the balloons will fly apart. Get the kids to commit themselves and tell you why they think they are right.



Now do it. What happens? Answer these questions:

- 1 – Is it possible to think that we are right and, in fact, be wrong?
- 2 – What does it take to change our minds about something?
- 3 – Read Acts 9:1-2. Did Saul think he was right? What caused him to change his mind about Jesus?

Here is another counterintuitive activity that teaches the same lesson. Hold a piece of paper between your fingers and let it curl down away from you. Ask the kids what the paper will do when you blow *down and across* the top of it. Let them predict what they think will happen and then do it. The results are unexpected.



For the record, both activities demonstrate the Bernoulli Effect. It is the same moving air principle that gives lift to airplane wings and lets the plane get off the ground! Two or three centuries ago, who would have believed that a multiton jet liner could fly! Now we know that it is true.

On the road to Damascus, the unexpected happened. The Apostle Paul was convinced by hard evidence that Jesus was alive from the dead. He had been wrong about Jesus. He had to change his mind.

Recommendation: try these simple demonstrations beforehand.