



### Week 3: THE TEAM

**Would you rather be on a WINNING team or a LOSING team?**

**Have you ever had to work really hard to accomplish something or try out to make something: at team, get a part in a play or your school's music program?**

Every year at Elevate Soccer Academy we have to have tryouts to determine who will be on the travel teams for the entire next year. It is not always a fun time for athletes or coaches. What happens is for several weeks hundreds of athletes, who have worked very hard in soccer, compete against each other for spots on the teams, including athletes who have already been on the team and who are new and are hoping to join Elevate Soccer Academy. It is a good, high winning program. However, not everyone can make it...not everyone is "Chosen".

In Acts we find the story of a very unique individual *chosen* for God's purpose. Saul was a religious leader who was convinced that followers of Jesus, Christians, should be imprisoned and even killed. Saul was actively pursuing Christians for this reason. In Damascus when a light from Heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice say "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute ME?" When Saul asked who He was, the voice said "Jesus whom you are persecuting!" When Saul rose from the ground he was blind, unable to see. For three days he was unable to see until a man named Ananias was sent by God to place his hands on Saul's eyes to heal him and allow him to see again. Of course, Ananias was a follower of Christ and he knew Saul had been persecuting Christians so he did not want to go do this for fear of Saul harming him as well. But God told Ananias "Go! (Saul) is my **chosen instrument** to proclaim my name...". Ananias did as he was told, and said "Brother Saul, the Lord—Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here—has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. Saul, who we know also as PAUL (named such after his conversion) was then used to bring the Gospel to a whole different group of people, the Gentiles, and to reach many many for Christ!!

God decided to use someone none of us would ever expect to complete His purpose. Week one we talked about God wanting to be the coach of your life. Last week we discussed that we are all imperfect and in need of a Savior to save us from the punishment of our sins. Well, Jesus has conquered death and sin, and in Revelation we can see that at the end of time, Jesus will completely destroy Satan and evil...in other words, His team is the winning team. *UNLIKE* athletic teams, you do *not* have to tryout, work super hard, have specific skills, or *earn* an invitation onto the team. Like Saul in this story, **you are Chosen**. God has invited you onto his team. When we invite athletes onto our athletic teams, we call the athletes and their families, offering an invitation onto the team, asking them if they will accept it. **Right now God is offering you a much greater invitation...an invitation to serve Him, to give your life to Him, and to have your sins forgiven, allowing for unity with Him. Have you already accepted it, and if not will you accept that invitation today and ask Jesus into your heart?**

*\*\*Salvation ABC's **A**ccept you are a sinner and sin need of a Savior, **B**elieve Christ died for your sins then rose again 3 days later, **C**onfess your sins and Ask Christ into your heart.*

*Simple Salvation prayer: Lord God I know that I am a sinner and cannot have unity with you because of this, but I know Jesus died to forgive me for those sins. I ask that you would forgive me and cleanse me from those sins. Please come into my heart; I give my life to you. Thank you Lord, AMEN.\*\**