

The Shipwreck

BIBLE PASSAGE: Acts 27:13-44; 28:11-16

MAIN POINT: God protected Paul in the shipwreck so he could stand before Caesar.

KEY PASSAGE: Philippians 1:20-21

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: When should we tell others about Jesus? We should always tell others about Jesus even when it is difficult.

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Leader BIBLE STUDY

Paul was in Roman custody because of unfounded accusations brought against him by the Jews. Paul had stood before rulers in Caesarea and invoked his right as a Roman citizen to appeal to Caesar. So Festus the governor arranged for Paul to go to Rome.

Paul got onto a ship going toward Rome. As if Paul's journey to Rome had not already been delayed and complicated enough, the ship was caught up in a terrible storm. Paul had warned the crew not to sail from Crete because they would lose everything and die. But they didn't listen. Paul pointed out the error of their ways, but he still gave them hope. An angel had appeared to Paul. He said

Paul would make it to Rome and all of the people with him would survive.

Paul urged everyone on the ship to eat so they would have energy. They planned to run the ship ashore on an island, but the ship got stuck on a sandbar. The waves battered the ship and it broke into pieces; however, all of the people survived and made it safely to shore.

Paul suffered for Christ. In his letter to the church at Corinth, Paul listed the kinds of things he faced: beatings, stoning, shipwrecks, various dangers, hardship, sleepless nights, hunger and thirst, nakedness, and other daily pressures. (See 2 Cor. 11:24-29.) Again and again, Paul saw evidence of God's control over his life and the gospel was advanced.

As you teach kids, emphasize that Paul trusted God to keep His promise to rescue them from the storm. He also encouraged the sailors to trust God too. God calls us to trust in His Son, Jesus, who died to rescue us from sin and death, and to tell others this good news. We can encourage others to trust God because we know He is good and in control.



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The BIBLE STORY

Bible Storytelling Tips

- **Use sound effects:**

Play sound effects of wind or rain at an appropriate time as you tell the story.

- **Use motions:**

As you tell the story, use your body to act out throwing things overboard, eating bread, and swimming to shore.

The Shipwreck

Acts 27:13-44; 28:11-16

Paul was a prisoner in Caesarea. He had asked to see Caesar about his case. Caesar was the leader of the Roman Empire, **so Paul got on a ship with other prisoners going to Rome. The journey was difficult. Strong winds and rain tossed the ship.** The crew threw things overboard and tried to keep the ship from breaking apart, but the storm did not stop for many days. **All the people on the ship were afraid they would die.**

One night, God sent an angel to Paul. The angel told Paul to not be afraid. God would save the lives of everyone on the ship. Paul told everyone on board what God had said. “Take courage,” he said. Paul believed everything would happen just like God said. The people on the ship would not die. They would have to run the ship onto an island.

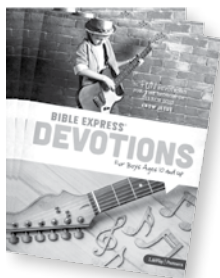
When the ship got close to an island, some of the sailors tried to escape in the lifeboat. Paul told them they would only be saved if they stayed on the ship. The sailors listened to Paul. No one had eaten in a long time, so Paul told them to eat. He thanked God and broke the bread, and everyone ate. Then they raised the sails and headed toward the island.

When they got close, **the ship struck a sandbar and stopped. The waves crashed into the ship, and it began to break into pieces.** The soldiers were afraid the prisoners would escape, so some of them wanted to kill the prisoners. But **an army officer ordered everyone to swim for shore. Those who could not swim clung to the planks and pieces of the ship. They all made it safely to shore. Paul**

was right; God saved all of their lives.

Three months later, Paul got onto another ship and sailed to Rome. Paul was still a prisoner, but instead of going to jail, Paul was allowed to live by himself in a house. A soldier stayed with him to guard him. People came to Paul's house and listened to him speak about the kingdom of God and about Jesus. Some of the people believed and followed Jesus.

Christ Connection: Paul trusted God to keep His promise to rescue them from the storm. He encouraged the sailors to trust and obey God too. God calls us to trust in His Son, Jesus, who died to rescue us from sin and death, and to tell others this good news.



**WANT TO
DISCOVER
GOD'S WORD?
GET
BIBLE EXPRESS!**

Invite kids to check out this week's devotionals to discover how God's Word can help them grow in the gospel. Order in bulk, subscribe quarterly, or purchase individually. For more information, check out www.lifeway.com/devotionals.

Introduce the STORY

SESSION TITLE: The Shipwreck

BIBLE PASSAGE: Acts 27:13-44; 28:11-16

MAIN POINT: God protected Paul in the shipwreck so he could stand before Caesar.

KEY PASSAGE: Philippians 1:20-21

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: When should we tell others about Jesus? We should always tell others about Jesus even when it is difficult.

Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. Prompt kids to share about a time they made someone else a promise. Did they keep the promise? Why or why not?

SAY • We are going to learn today how Paul was in another difficult situation, but he trusted God to rescue him. God always keeps His promises.

Activity page (5 minutes)

- “Survival at Sea” activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Invite kids to complete “Survival at Sea” on the activity page. Kids should use the clues to fill in the blanks and discover what Paul faced in today’s Bible story.

SAY • Paul faced suffering and trials as he shared the good news about Jesus. He was arrested and put in prison. People tried to kill him.

Do you think a shipwreck could stop Paul? Would that be the final straw? We will find out in today’s Bible story.

Session starter (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Meant to protect

Challenge kids to think of and share things that protect them in various situations. (Examples: sunscreen in the sun, helmet on bike, and so on) List their ideas on a chalkboard or dry erase board.

SAY • You all shared some great examples of things that are meant to protect you from harm; but I have a question: Will sunscreen protect you from a shark bite? These things are helpful in some situations, but they can't protect you from everything.

In the Bible story we will hear today, Paul needed protection during a storm. Nothing he or the sailors on the boat could do would keep them safe. We'll find out what happened when Paul was shipwrecked.



- chalkboard or dry erase board
- chalk or marker

OPTION 2: Float a boat

Give each kid a golf ball-size lump of clay. Invite kids to use the clay to form a boat. Encourage creativity. If kids need help, suggest they roll the clay into a ball and press in the center with their thumb. Then they could pinch the sides and flatten out the bottom.

Allow kids to test out their boats in a shallow tub of water. Provide pennies to see how much weight their boats can carry before they sink.

SAY • In today's Bible story, Paul found himself on a ship in some dangerous waters. Everyone on the ship was afraid they wouldn't survive. In fact, the boat hit a sandbar and broke into pieces! Do you think Paul and the others survived? We'll find out!

- clay or play dough
- pennies
- shallow tub of water
- towels (for cleanup)

Transition to teach the story

Teach the STORY

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Countdown

• countdown video

Show the countdown video as your kids arrive, and set it to end as the session begins.

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

• leader attire
• hand towel
• journal

[Leader enters a bit wet and out of breath with journal in hand. Leader uses a hand towel to pat away the water.]

LEADER • Oh hey, kids. Whew, you'll have to excuse me. I was just doing some exploring and I slipped once or twice into some tide pools. But I do have something cool to tell you!

Tip: Sketch a simple boat in the journal.

You won't believe what I found on the other side of the island. It was too big for me to bring to you, so I drew a picture of it. *[Open the journal to show a simple drawing of a boat.]* Can you tell what it is? *[Allow kids to respond.]* That there is a big old boat that has been shipwrecked on this island. It is quite a sight to see. It reminds me of the situation Paul faced in our Bible story today. As if Paul hadn't been through enough spending so much time in jail, he was also shipwrecked! Are you ready to hear more?

Big picture question (1 minute)

LEADER • Now remember, Paul dedicated his life to sharing the gospel with others. As we have seen, Paul's life was not always easy. He experienced hardship and suffering. Keep that in mind when we answer our big picture question: ***When should we tell others about Jesus?*** Only when it is fun? Only when it is easy? [*Lead kids to say the answer together.*] ***We should always tell others about Jesus even when it is difficult.***

Giant timeline (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline or big story circle. Point to previous stories as you review.

• Giant Timeline or
Big Story Circle

LEADER • The Bible tells us the story of how God rescues sinners through His Son, Jesus. In the New Testament, we find the story of Paul, a believer who helped spread the gospel—the good news about Jesus. We've heard some incredible stories about how Paul boldly shared Jesus. A couple weeks ago, we heard about the Jewish people's plan to stop Paul. They wanted to kill Paul, but Paul was arrested. **When Paul was arrested, God protected him so he could preach about Jesus.**

Last week, we learned about Paul before rulers. **Paul preached about Jesus to governors and kings,** just as God had chosen him to do. He was all set to go to Rome to see Caesar.

Today we are right here [*point to today's story on the timeline*] where Paul's story really gets stormy. Today's story is called "The Shipwreck." Uh-oh. It sounds like Paul's trip to Rome wasn't exactly a piece of cake.

- Bibles
- “The Shipwreck” video
- Big Picture Question Poster
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Acts 27:13-44; 28:11-16. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “The Shipwreck.”

LEADER • God had appeared to Paul in prison and told him he would go to Rome to tell people about Jesus. But Paul spent a couple of years in prison before he finally got on a ship to go to Rome. Many prisoners were aboard the ship, along with some soldiers who looked after them. An angel appeared to Paul at night and said Paul would make it to Rome and all of the people on the ship would survive.

God protected Paul in the shipwreck so he could stand before Caesar. When the ship wrecked near the island of Malta, no one on the ship was hurt.

Paul finally got to Rome, and he was allowed to live in a house. A soldier stayed there to guard Paul, but people were allowed to visit him. Some of Paul’s visitors heard the gospel and believed in Jesus.

God worked everything out for His plan. God still works today, giving believers strength and courage through the Holy Spirit so that people all over the world will hear the gospel and believe. ***When should we tell others about Jesus? We should always tell others about Jesus even when it is difficult.***

Tip: Use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

Christ connection

LEADER • Paul trusted God to keep His promise to rescue them from the storm. He encouraged the sailors to trust and obey God, too. God called Paul to trust Him in a tough situation. God also wants us to trust His Son, Jesus, who died to rescue us from sin and

death, and to tell others this good news.

Key passage (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together Philippians 1:20-21. Explain to the group that you are going to read a part of the passage, and they should echo it back. Continue until kids say the entire key passage.

LEADER • In our Bible story, Paul's life was in danger once again. He faced a storm and a shipwreck, but he stood strong in his faith in the Lord. He believed God's promise to protect him. God always keeps His promises.

Lead boys and girls in singing "My Eager Expectation."

- Key Passage Poster
- "My Eager Expectation" song

Discussion starter video (4 minutes)

LEADER • Think about the last time you felt discouraged. What happened? How did you respond? Check out this short video.

- "Unit 34, Session 3" discussion starter video

Show the "Unit 34, Session 3" discussion starter video.

Then lead kids to discuss the following questions:

- How do you think the kids felt when they weren't selling any lemonade? What would have happened if they had given up?
- Have you ever felt discouraged as a Christian? What things might discourage believers today?
- Why is it important to not give up living out God's mission?

LEADER • God calls us to live on mission even when we feel discouraged or disappointed. We can trust that God will accomplish His plan through us. ***When should we tell others about Jesus? We should always tell others about Jesus even when it is difficult.***

• “Unstoppable Victory”
song

Sing (4 minutes)

LEADER • Whether things are going well or we are suffering, God is trustworthy. He loves us! His plans are for His glory and our good, even when we don't understand His ways. Think about that as we worship Him through song now.

Sing together “Unstoppable Victory.”

Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to apply the story.

LEADER • Lord God, we need You. We confess that we too often doubt Your plans when life is hard, but You love us and will give us everything we need. We put our hope in You. Give us eyes to see You and hearts to trust You. In Jesus' name, amen.

Dismiss to apply the story

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.



God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.



We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)



God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.



Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.



We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus. Provide *I'm a Christian Now!* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.

Apply the STORY

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Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- plastic cups
- permanent marker

Write the key passage in words or phrases on plastic cups. Write the first word upside-down, the second word right side-up, the third word upside-down, and so on so kids can stack the cups vertically to form a tower.

Challenge the group to see how quickly they can stack the cups to make them read in order from bottom to top. When kids finish, lead them to say the key passage aloud. Then let them knock down the tower and play again.

SAY • Paul dedicated his life to sharing the gospel. We saw in our Bible story today that **God protected Paul in the shipwreck so he could stand before Caesar.** Paul wanted to honor God no matter what—in life and in death.

Bible story review & Bible skills (10 minutes)

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Main Point Poster
- paper
- markers or crayons

Provide paper and markers or crayons. Form four groups of kids. Assign each group a part of the story to illustrate. Provide Bibles for groups to read their assigned passages:

- Group 1: Acts 27:13-20
- Group 2: Acts 27:21-24,33-37
- Group 3: Acts 27:39-44

- Group 4: Acts 28:11-16

Allow each kid to illustrate her own drawing, so a group will have multiple drawings of the same passage.

When kids finish, invite group 1 to stand at the front of the room and show their drawings to the rest of the kids. Prompt them to retell in their own words their assigned portion of today's story. Thank group 1 and call for group 2 to show and explain their illustrations. Continue with groups 3 and 4.

SAY •While many things happened on Paul's journey to Rome, God was not surprised by any of them. **God protected Paul in the shipwreck so he could stand before Caesar.** Paul trusted God to keep His promise to rescue everyone from the storm. He encouraged sailors to trust God, too.

God calls us to trust in His Son, Jesus, who died to rescue us from sin and death, and to tell others this good news. Like a person with a life jacket would throw it out to another person who is drowning, we can tell others about Jesus because He is our only hope for life and salvation. Jesus saves!

Activity choice (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Shipwreck!

Clear an area to play an active game. Mark a line on the floor in the middle of the room. The line should be long enough for all the kids to stand on it.

Instruct kids to line up, and explain that you are the captain and they are the crew. You will give commands and the kids will perform specific actions or sounds. Before playing, teach kids the commands. Explain that you are all sailing on a dangerous sea, and everyone needs to work

Option: Retell or review the Bible story using the bolded text of the Bible story script.



• masking tape or painter's tape

together and obey the captain's commands to survive.

- *Roll call*: Players must stand with their toes on the line, salute, and say, "Aye-aye, Captain!" The crew may not lower their salute until you say, "At ease."
- *Crow's nest*: Players act as if they're climbing a ladder to the crow's nest at the top of the main mast.
- *Swab the deck*: Players act like they're mopping.
- *Row to shore*: Players find a partner, simulate rowing, and sing "Row, Row, Row Your Boat."

To play, call out a command. Any kid who does not follow the command correctly or who is the last to obey should sit out. The goal is to be the last crew member standing.

SAY • In today's Bible story, Paul found himself on a ship in some dangerous waters, but **God protected Paul in the shipwreck so he could stand before Caesar.**

OPTION 2: Human battleship

Create a tall divider in the room. Form two groups and assign each group a side of the room. Instruct players to lay on their group's side of the playing area.

Start a beach ball on one side with the kids throwing it over the divider to the other side hoping for it to land on another player. If the ball hits a player, her ship is sunk and she sits outside the playing area. The first team to sink all the other team's ships wins.

SAY • In this game you tried your best to sink another ship. Was this easy or hard? [*Allow kids to respond.*] In the kind of storm Paul was in, it was likely the ship would sink and many could be seriously injured and even killed.

God had other plans. God kept His promise to rescue them from the storm. ***When should we tell***

- sheet
- clothesline
- chairs
- beach ball

Option: Review the gospel with boys and girls. Explain that kids are welcome to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions.

others about Jesus? We should always tell others about Jesus even when it is difficult.

Journal and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?
- Are there any promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

As kids journal, invite them to share their ideas. Then pray, thanking God for His Word. Pray that boys and girls would trust in Jesus, who died to rescue us from sin and death. Pray that they would tell others the good news about Jesus.

As time allows, lead kids to complete "Message in a Bottle" on the activity page.

- pencils
- Journal Page
- "Message in a Bottle" activity page, 1 per kid

Tip: Give parents this week's *Big Picture Cards for Families* to allow families to interact with the biblical content at home.