

The Shipwreck

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

MAIN POINT: God protected Paul in the shipwreck.

KEY PASSAGE: Philippians 1:21

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: When should we tell others about Jesus? We should tell about Jesus all the time.

INTRODUCE THE STORY
(15–20 MINUTES)
PAGE 34



TEACH THE STORY
(10–15 MINUTES)
PAGE 36



EXPERIENCE THE STORY
(20–25 MINUTES)
PAGE 38



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 preschoolers, 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

• **Make it interactive:**

When discussing the storm, spritz the preschoolers with a light spray of water from a squirt bottle. Flicker the classroom lights off and on quickly to represent lightening. Play storm sound effects. Guide children to rock back and forth as if in the boat. Pretend to swim to shore.

• **Use sticky notes:**

Draw simple pictures or shapes on sticky notes to represent different parts of the story. Arrange the sticky note drawings so they cover the Bible Story Picture Poster. As you come to the appropriate moment in the Bible story, remove a sticky note. Continue until all the sticky notes have been removed.

The Shipwreck

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

Paul was a prisoner, and he was going to Rome to see Caesar, the emperor of the Roman Empire. Paul got on a ship with other prisoners going to Rome. But a big storm made the journey difficult. Strong winds, waves, and rain pushed the ship up and down. **All the people on the ship were afraid** they would die.

God sent an angel to Paul. The angel told Paul to not be afraid. God was going to keep everyone on the ship safe. Paul told the other people on the ship what God had said. “Be brave,” he said. “I believe God is telling the truth. We will be safe, but we have to get the ship onto an island.”

The ship got close to an island, and some of the sailors tried to escape in a lifeboat. Paul told them to stay on the ship if they wanted to be safe. **The sailors obeyed Paul.** Now, everyone was really hungry so Paul told them it was time to eat. He thanked God and broke the bread, and everyone ate. Then they sailed closer to the island.

All of a sudden, the ship hit a sandbar in the water and got stuck. The waves crashed into the ship, and it **began to break into pieces. A soldier in charge told everyone to swim to the shore. Anyone who could not swim clung to the pieces of the ship. Everyone made it to shore. Paul was right; God had kept all of them safe.**

Three months later, Paul got onto another ship and went to Rome. He 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, and people came to Paul’s house to visit. Paul taught people

about God's kingdom and about Jesus, and some of them believed.

Christ Connection: Paul trusted God's promise to keep him and everyone else safe from the storm. He told the sailors to trust God too. God wants us to trust Jesus. Jesus died to keep us safe from sin and death. We can tell this good news to everyone.



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GOD'S WORD?
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MORE!**

Invite preschoolers 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

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BIG PICTURE QUESTION: When should we tell others about Jesus? We should tell about Jesus all the time.

Welcome time

- “Don’t Stop” song
- offering basket
- Allergy Alert download
- favorite toys related to the Bible story theme

Play the unit theme song in the background as you greet preschoolers and follow your church’s security procedures. Set an offering basket near the door to collect at an appropriate time. Post an allergy alert, if necessary. Set out a few favorite theme-related toys, such as puzzles and blocks.

Activity page

- “What Happened Next?” activity page, 1 per child
- pencils or crayons

Invite a child to examine the pictures and determine what happened first, next, and last. As children work, discuss whether they have been in the water on a boat.

SAY • As Paul was sailing to Rome, something scary happened. Can you tell from the pictures? The other people on the boat were afraid. God sent an angel to tell Paul that everyone on the boat would be safe, and God kept His promise. Listen to hear what happened in today’s Bible story.

Play out riding in a boat

Set up a “boat” by arranging chairs, one for each child, in short rows. Invite the children to sit in the chairs and play out what it would be like to be in a boat during the conditions below. Vary the length and frequency of the



conditions to keep preschoolers engaged. Consider allowing preschoolers to suggest conditions.

- peaceful waters (sit still)
- rough seas (flail limbs about)
- choppy waves (sit up tall and slump down repeatedly)
- pouring rains (cover heads, hide under chairs)
- thunder and lightning (cover ears)
- chilly winds (shiver, teeth chatter, rub arms)

SAY • Have you ever been in a boat? What was the weather like? In today's Bible story, Paul was in a boat traveling to Rome when a big storm came. Listen to hear how God kept everyone on the boat safe.

Explore protection items

Fill a bag with protective items that are used in water such as floats, nose plug, swim floaties, goggles, snorkel, and so forth. Pull out one item at a time and let preschoolers describe how that item protects us.

- bag
- protective items for swimming

SAY • All of these items can help protect us when we are in the water. In today's Bible story, Paul needed more than goggles and floaties when a storm came while he was on a boat. Paul and the others on the boat needed protection that only God can provide. Listen to hear how God protected Paul and the others.

Transition to teach the story

To gain the attention of all the preschoolers to move them to Bible study, show the countdown video, flip off the lights, or clap a simple rhythm for the children to copy. Invite children to sway back and forth as if they are on a boat in a storm as they move to group time.

- countdown video (optional)

Teach THE STORY

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Introduce the Bible story

- “Map” printable
- globe (optional)

Show boys and girls the Mediterranean Sea on the “Map” printable or a globe. Suggest children brainstorm different forms of transportation that someone could use to make Paul’s journey from Caesarea to Rome.

SAY • Paul was going to Rome to talk to Caesar, the emperor of Rome. A ship was the best way to make the trip, but Paul had trouble on the way to Rome.

Watch or tell the Bible story

- Bible
- bookmark
- “The Shipwreck” video (optional)
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Place a bookmark at Acts 27 in your Bible. Invite a preschooler to open it. Reverently display the open Bible.

SAY • Today’s story is from the New Testament part of the Bible in the Book of Acts. The Bible is the most important book there is because it is God’s Word. All the stories we hear in the Bible really happened.

Show the video or tell the Bible story using the provided storytelling tips. Use the bolded version of the Bible story for young preschoolers.

Talk about the Bible story

- Main Point Poster
- Giant Timeline or Big Story Circle

SAY • Paul trusted God’s promise to keep him and everyone else safe from the storm. He told the sailors to trust

God too. **God protected Paul in the shipwreck.**

God wants us to trust Jesus. Jesus died to keep us safe from sin and death. We can tell this good news to everyone.

Point to the Bible story picture on the giant timeline or big story circle as you ask the following review questions:

1. Why was Paul traveling to Rome? (*to talk to Caesar, the emperor of Rome*)
2. What happened while Paul was sailing to Rome? (*A big storm came with wind and rain.*)
3. Whom did God send to Paul to tell him everyone on the ship would be safe? (*an angel*)
4. What happened to Paul when he got to Rome? (*Paul lived in a house with a soldier to guard him.*)

Learn the big picture question

SAY • Everywhere Paul went, he wanted people to trust Jesus. We know the good news that Jesus died to keep us safe from sin, and we can tell everyone this good news. ***When should we tell others about Jesus? We should tell about Jesus all the time.***

• Big Picture Question Poster

Practice the key passage

Open your Bible to Philippians 1:21. Read the key passage aloud several times. Sing together the key passage song, “To Live Is Christ.”

SAY • Paul’s life was not always easy, but Paul was happy to live for Jesus. Paul knew that being with Jesus is far better than anything else. But while he was alive, Paul wanted to help other believers.

• Key Passage Poster
• “To Live Is Christ” song

Transition to experience the story

Experience THE STORY

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LOW PREP

Play out the story

Lead preschoolers to perform motions for different words in the Bible story. Call out the words and lead children in performing the actions below. Start slow and then increase in speed. Retell the Bible story and lead preschoolers in performing the motions as they hear the words.

- sail: sit down
- storm: wave arms and make wind noises
- scared: make scared faces
- pray: put hands together
- eat: pretend to eat
- swim: pretend to swim
- land: lay on the ground as if tired

SAY • God protected Paul in the shipwreck. Paul trusted God's promise to keep him and everyone else safe from the storm. He told the sailors to trust God too. God wants us to trust Jesus. Jesus died to keep us safe from sin and death. We can tell this good news to everyone.

- knife (adult use)
- foam pool noodle
- plastic straws
- foam sheets
- scissors
- hole punch
- large plastic tub
- water
- towels (for cleanup)

Make and float boats

Before the session, use a knife to cut a foam pool noodle into 1-inch slices. Cut plastic straws into 3-inch pieces. Cut

out 2-inch triangles from foam sheets. Punch a hole in the top and bottom of each triangle. Set out supplies. Help a preschooler thread a straw piece through the holes in her triangle to form a sail. Show her how to push the end of the sail into the pool noodle piece to make a boat. Allow preschoolers to float the boats in a tub of water.

SAY • God helped Paul tell so many people about Jesus. He kept on telling people, even when he was on the ship.
When should we tell others about Jesus? We should tell about Jesus all the time.

Experiment with wave bottles

Before the session, fill $\frac{1}{3}$ of a bottle with oil. Invite a child to pour water through a funnel into the bottle and add a few drops of food color. Secure lid with strong tape. Gently shake the bottle to mix the coloring with the water. Print the main point directly onto the bottle and allow a preschooler to attach decorative tape strips.

SAY • During the storm, the wind and waves tossed the ship all around. Do you see the waves move in your wave bottle? When the ship broke apart during the storm, **God protected Paul in the shipwreck.** Paul trusted that God would keep everyone on the ship safe from the storm.

Trace and draw waves

Print the “Waves” printable and seal it between two pieces of clear contact plastic. Place a smock on each child. Set the covered paper on a table and invite a child to trace the wave patterns with a dry erase marker. Challenge a child to create additional wave patterns on a blank piece of paper. Suggest a preschooler draw boats on the waves.

- plastic bottles, 1 per child
- clear oil (baby oil, cooking oil)
- funnel
- water
- food color
- duct tape
- permanent marker (adult use)

- “Waves” printable, 1 per child
- clear contact plastic
- scissors
- smocks
- dry erase markers
- paper
- markers

Note: Closely monitor a child's use of dry erase markers to avoid marker stains on clothing.

SAY • The ship Paul and the other prisoners were sailing on went up and down with the motion of the waves during the storm. Even after the ship got stuck and began to break into pieces, **God protected Paul in the shipwreck.** Paul trusted God when the angel told him that everyone on the ship would make it to shore.

Create wind with friends

- cotton balls, 1 per child
- drinking straws, 1 per child
- disinfecting wipes

Place two cotton balls on one end of a table. Give two preschoolers a drinking straw. Demonstrate how to blow through the straw to create wind. Encourage a child to blow through his straw to move his cotton ball toward the other end of the table. Throw straws and cotton balls away. Disinfect the table with wipes. Choose another two preschoolers to play again.

SAY • After the windy storm caused the ship to break apart, **God protected Paul in the shipwreck.** He spent three months on an island before taking another ship to Rome. Paul was still a prisoner, but he was allowed to live in a house with a guard. People came to the house to talk to Paul, and even though he was in jail, Paul told his visitors the good news of Jesus. ***When should we tell others about Jesus? We should tell about Jesus all the time.***

Snack

Play the countdown video to signal the end of activities. Guide preschoolers to clean their areas. Take a restroom break and wash hands. Gather preschoolers for snack time. Thank God for the snack.

Serve apple slices for snack. Once the fruit is peeled and sliced, point out that the apple slice resembles a boat. Remind preschoolers that although the ship crashed during the storm, **God protected Paul in the shipwreck.**

- countdown video (optional)
- Allergy Alert download
- snack food
- paper cups and napkins

Transition

When a child finishes his snack, guide him to throw away any trash. He may select a book or puzzle to examine, play quietly with play dough or a favorite toy, or color the Bible story coloring page.

Offer the journal page and invite preschoolers to draw something they recall from today's story. Options include a ship at sea, an island, a storm, and people visiting Paul in the house jail. Talk about all the times Paul talked to people about Jesus. Ask the big picture question as a child creates.

When should we tell others about Jesus? We should tell about Jesus all the time. Invite children to repeat the big picture answer two or three times. Pray for the children.

SAY • God, thank You for giving us the Bible. When we read about Paul's life, it helps us to know that we can trust Jesus. It gives us boldness to tell everyone the good news. Amen.

If parents are picking up their children at this time, tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session. Distribute the preschool big picture cards for families.

- books
- puzzles
- play dough
- Journal Page printable, 1 per child
- Bible Story Coloring Page
- crayons
- Big Picture Cards for Families: Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers