



LESSON 4

PAUL'S SHIPWRECK

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: The Holy Spirit Gives Us Courage

SCRIPTURE: Acts 27–28

GOD'S BIG STORY: Paul—who was eager to share the good news of Jesus with the Roman emperor, Caesar—was imprisoned and taken onto a ship sailing toward Rome. Miraculously, all passengers survive a catastrophic shipwreck.

WORD OF WONDER: Don't copy the ways of the world. Let God transform you. —from Romans 12:2

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

Luke, author of both the Gospel of Luke and Acts, writes in the first-person voice only in the final chapters of Acts (the “we” passages). Many Bible commentators take this to mean that Luke was a travel companion of Paul and present during these events.

WHAT?

Paul's elevated status meant that a centurion guarded him. This centurion saved his life, for whereas the other soldiers were planning to kill the prisoners, Paul's guard persuades them to trust the prisoners to swim—requiring that their chains be removed (Acts 27:43).

WHERE?

When the ship came to rest on the island of Malta (Acts 28:1), it had traveled at least 600 miles from Crete. These are some of the most treacherous waters in the Mediterranean Sea.

WHEN?

A voyage after the feast of the Day of Atonement (Acts 27:9) means the ship was traveling to Rome as late as October, when the dangerous conditions of winter were already threatening. Travel by ship would become outright impossible in only a few short weeks.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

From Luke 8:22–25, we know Jesus has the authority to command the winds and the waves. Like Jesus, who was able to sleep during a storm, Paul calmly urges his companions to eat and await God's deliverance (Acts 27:33–34).

Play Stations

Greet the kids warmly and briefly explain the play stations to them. Invite them to play at any of the stations.

Welcome to church! While we're getting ready to start, you can play at any of these stations to help you get ready for our lesson today. Do you have any ideas of what we'll be learning today?

Play Station: Beach Exploration

Set-up: Fill one bucket with sand, seashells, and driftwood. Fill another bucket with water and toy boats. Place the paper fan next to the water bucket.

Play: Encourage kids to explore beach textures through sand, water, shells, and driftwood. Let kids wave the paper fan or lightly tap the side of the bucket to see how it creates waves on the "ocean."

Play Station: Rolling Ocean Storm

Set-up: Lay a blue blanket (or sheet) down with a toy boat in the middle.

Play: Instruct the kids to grab a corner of the blanket (or sheet) and move it up and down gently, creating "waves," and see how the boat is tossed by the storm.

Play Station: Paul's Shipwreck Coloring Sheet

Set-up: Print one copy per kid of the [Coloring Sheet](#). Set out the Coloring Sheets and coloring utensils.

Play: Let the kids color. The kids can also turn the sheet over and draw a picture of a boat.

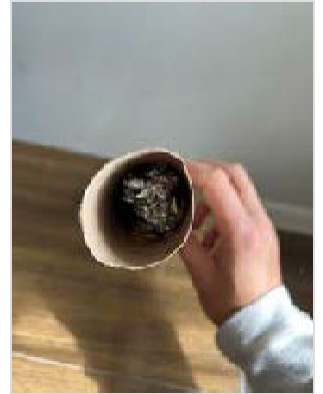
Craft: Rain Sticks

Today, we'll make our own rain sticks to remind us of how we can have courage in scary situations, like Paul had courage through the storm. Every time you use your rain stick, remember how God is with you through His Holy Spirit. Knowing God is with us gives us courage!

Allergy Caution: This activity includes possible food allergens!

Show kids how to make their own rain stick. First, seal one end of the cardboard tube by covering the end with paper and taping completely around the paper. Next, crumple and roll the aluminum foil into a cylinder and put it in the tube. Then add the mixture of dry rice and beans to the tube. Finally, seal the other end of the tube shut by covering it with paper and taping completely around the paper. The kids can decorate their tubes if they want.

Now that you have a rain stick, turn it upside down to allow the beans and rice to fall through the tube and listen carefully. It should sound like rain. Take this home as a reminder that God is with you and can give you courage even when you face things that are scary.



Identity

Closing Activity: Sailing on the Sea!

Lay a blanket (or sheet) on the floor to act as the “ship” in this game. Invite the kids to “board the ship” and sit down on the blanket.

When Paul’s ship experienced bad weather, Paul helped the sailors and the commander know what to do. In this game, I will give you some commands to follow related to sailing on the sea. See if all of you can work together as a team and do them at the same time. If I yell, “Shipwreck,” you should make a swimming motion.

Row the boat: Make a rowing motion.

Hoist the sails: Makes fists and have their fists move in a downward motion, one over the other, like pretending to pull a rope.

Feel seasick: Grab stomach and moan.

Fish for food: Place both hands above one shoulder and make a forward-throwing motion.

Sharks: Make a surprised or scared face.

Call out different actions for the kids to follow. Don’t forget to call out “Shipwreck” from time to time. If you have time, allow kids to take turns calling out the commands.

Make It Inclusive!

If you have a kid unable to sit in the ship or participate in the actions, invite her to help you call out the actions.

Prayer and Blessing

After the kids finish their activity, pray with them, thanking God for giving us courage through His Holy Spirit.

God, thank You for being our place of safety. We know You are always with us, through Your Holy Spirit. Because You are with us, we can have courage even when life gets hard. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Encourage the kids to hold their hands out in front of them, with palms up, as if their hands were open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them.

Blessing: May God bless you with His presence. May His Holy Spirit give you courage during every scary situation in your life.