

Paul Preached in Europe

BIBLE PASSAGE: Acts 17:16-34

MAIN POINT: Paul taught the people in Athens about the one true God.

KEY PASSAGE: Acts 1:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How do people hear about Jesus? God uses Christians to tell others about Jesus.

INTRODUCE THE STORY
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TELL THE STORY
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EXPERIENCE THE STORY
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Leader BIBLE STUDY

Paul and Silas had been released from prison in Philippi (FIH lih pigh). Before leaving the city, they met with believers at Lydia's house and encouraged them. Then they traveled to Thessalonica and stopped at the synagogue to explain to the Jews that Jesus is the Messiah. A large number of Greeks and influential women believed in Jesus.

Before long, Jews in the city became jealous and forced Paul and Silas out of the city. Even though the Jews opposed Paul's preaching, the number of believers in Thessalonica grew and the church there was established.

Paul made his way through Berea, where people heard the gospel and believed. The Jews from Thessalonica followed him and caused trouble, so Paul went to Athens. Athens—about 200 miles from Berea—was a cultural center. People in Athens loved to hear about and study the latest ideas. The Jews and the philosophers in the city were interested in what Paul had to say, but Paul was troubled by what he saw. Athens was full of idols to every kind of god. There was even an altar to an unknown god.

The people obviously had a religious desire. Paul knew that their hunger for God could be satisfied—in Jesus. Paul began preaching, telling the people that they worshiped a god they did not know. He said that people can know God! God made the world and everything in it! “We ought not to think that God is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man,” Paul said.

Then Paul told them about Jesus and how God wanted them to turn away from their sins. Some people made fun of Paul, but others believed. Paul explained God’s plan of salvation. God is not like the Greek idols. Only God deserves our worship! Because Jesus took the punishment for our sin, we can know God.



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The BIBLE STORY

Bible Storytelling Tips

Paul Preached in Europe

Acts 17:16-34

- **Display a map:**

Show a map of Paul's missionary journeys. Trace Paul's second journey as you tell the Bible story.

- **Use a prop:** Set up a large cardboard box beside the teaching area. Write *unknown god* on the side of the box. At the appropriate part of the Bible story, draw a big cross over "unknown god" and write *Jesus is the one true God*.

God sent Paul to the city of Athens to tell people about Jesus. When Paul got there, he was upset! **The people in Athens** did not worship the one true God. They **worshiped false gods** instead. Paul told the people about Jesus. He told them that Jesus died and came back to life. Jesus is alive!

The people wanted to know more. **They had an altar where they worshiped a god they did not know. Paul told them that he knew who God is. "I will tell you about the one true God," he said.**

Paul said, "God made everything. God made all the people of the world, and He loves them. God is so big! God is bigger than any temple. He is not made of gold or silver or stone. God wants everyone to turn away from their sin and turn to Him.

Paul said that God sent Jesus to rescue people from sin. He said Jesus had died and come back to life, and some of the people laughed. Some people wanted to hear more later. And some people believed Paul's words, and they believed in Jesus.

Christ Connection: Paul taught the people in Athens about the one true God. He told them that Jesus died on the cross and is alive! People can know God because Jesus brings us into God's family.



**WANT TO
DISCOVER
GOD'S WORD?
GET
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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Welcome time

- “Children of the Kingdom” 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

- “Paul Goes to Athens” activity page, 1 per child
- pencils or crayons

Invite preschoolers to complete the maze to display Paul’s route to Athens.

SAY • God sent Paul to the city of Athens to tell people about Jesus. When Paul got there, he was upset! Listen to today’s Bible story to discover what Paul saw that was so upsetting to him.

Make play dough statues

Guide preschoolers to make statues out of play dough. Explain that statues are usually made to look like a person or animal. Often they are the size of the person or animal in real life or even larger. Ask preschoolers to tell you about their statues.

SAY • Statues can be good just to look at or to remind us of someone or something important, but can you



- play dough
- play dough toys

imagine worshipping a statue? That sounds silly, doesn't it? In today's Bible story, God sent Paul to the city of Athens. When Paul got there, he was upset! The people in Athens were worshipping false gods! Listen to hear what Paul told the people about the one true God.

Trace feet

Set paper on the floor and invite preschoolers to stand on the paper. Preschoolers may keep their shoes on or remove them. Use a marker or crayon to trace a child's feet. Invite children to use markers or crayons to decorate their footprints.

SAY • Paul used his feet to travel to many different places to share the gospel, the good news about Jesus. God sent Paul to the city of Athens in today's Bible story. Listen to hear what Paul found when he arrived in Athens.



- paper
- markers or crayons

Transition to tell 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 preschoolers to hold up one finger and say, “one true God” as they move to Bible study.

- countdown video (optional)

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Introduce the Bible story

Invite volunteers to tell you what they know about God.

SAY • In today's Bible story, Paul discovered the people of Athens did not know about the one true god. They worshiped false gods! Listen to hear what Paul told them about the one true God and His Son Jesus.

Watch or tell the Bible story

Place a bookmark at Acts 17 in your Bible. Invite a preschooler to open it. Reverently display the open Bible.

SAY • The Bible is God's Word. Everything in the Bible is true, and it tells us everything we need to know about the one true God. Today's Bible story is found in Acts.

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

Talk about the Bible story

SAY • The people in Athens worshiped false gods. **Paul taught the people in Athens about the one true God.** He told them that the one true God sent Jesus to rescue people from sin. People can know God because Jesus brings us into God's family.

- Bible
- bookmark
- "Paul Preached in Europe" video (optional)
- Bible Story Picture Poster

- Main Point Poster
- Giant Timeline or Big Story Circle

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

1. Did the people in Athens worship the one true God?
(*no*)
2. What did the people of Athens build for a god they did not know? (*an altar*)
3. What did Paul tell the people of Athens about God?
(*Answers will vary.*)
4. What did Paul tell the people of Athens about Jesus?
(*God sent Jesus to rescue people from sin. Jesus died and came back to life.*)
5. What did the people of Athens think about what Paul told them about Jesus? (*Some laughed, some wanted to hear more, and some believed.*)

Learn the big picture question

SAY • Paul taught the people in Athens about the one true God. He told them that Jesus died on the cross and is alive! ***How do people hear about Jesus? God uses Christians to tell others about Jesus.*** God wants us, like Paul, to tell people about Jesus so they can know God and be brought into His family.

• Big Picture Question Poster

Practice the key passage

Open your Bible to Acts 1:8. Read the key passage aloud several times. Sing together the key passage song.

SAY • The gospel, the good news about Jesus, is the most important message of all. Jesus gives us the joy and privilege of taking His message to all people.

• Key Passage Poster
• “You Will Be My Witnesses” song

Transition to experience the story

Experience THE STORY

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Sing “My God Is So Big”

Lead preschoolers in singing and performing the motions to “My God Is So Big.” If you are unfamiliar with the tune or the motions, look them up online before the session.

SAY • Paul taught the people in Athens about the one true God. Paul said, “God is so big! God is bigger than any temple.” He told them that Jesus died on the cross and is alive! People can know God because Jesus brings us into God’s family.

Work puzzles

• puzzles depicting things God made

Set out a variety of puzzles depicting things that God made. Review the Bible story as preschoolers work.

SAY • Paul told the people in Athens that God made everything. God made all the people of the world, and He loves them. **Paul taught the people in Athens about the one true God.** He told them that Jesus died on the cross and is alive! People can know God because Jesus brings us into God’s family.

Sort gold, silver, and stone

Before the session, gather small landscape rocks or river rocks. Spray paint some gold, some silver, and leave the others natural. Be sure the painted rocks have thoroughly dried before preschoolers handle them. Set out the “gold, silver, and stone” and invite preschoolers to sort and count them into bins or piles.

- landscape rocks or river rocks
- gold spray paint
- silver spray paint
- bins (optional)

SAY • Paul taught the people in Athens about the one true God. He told them that God is not made of gold or silver or stone like their false gods. He told them that Jesus died on the cross and is alive! People can know God because Jesus brings us into God’s family. God wants everyone to turn away from sin and trust in His Son, Jesus.

Compare books with the Bible

Set out a variety of books for preschoolers to explore. Include fiction books as well as non-fiction. Place a Bible among the books. As preschoolers browse, comment on how the Bible is different from the other books.

- fiction books
- non-fiction books
- Bible

SAY • Paul taught the people in Athens about the one true God. People in Athens loved to hear about and study new ideas. Today, people often read books to learn new things, but there is only one book we can trust completely to tell us what is true about God. That book is the Bible. We can know about the one true God and His Son, Jesus, from the Bible.

- transportation toys (cars, trucks, boats, trains, airplanes)
- blue and black construction paper
- scissors

Play with transportation toys

Set out a variety of transportation toys for preschoolers to play with. Set out strips of black construction paper for preschoolers to use to form roads. The children can use blue sheets of construction paper to form lakes, rivers, and oceans.

SAY • God sent Paul to many different places to share the gospel, the good news about Jesus. **Paul taught the people in Athens about the one true God.** Paul mostly walked or rode in a boat when he traveled. Today, we have lots of different ways we can travel. We can get to many people to tell them that Jesus died on the cross and is alive! People can know God because Jesus brings us into God's family.

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 bread, olives, figs, and cheese for snack. Explain that the people of Athens usually ate foods like these. God loved the people of Athens and wanted them to know about Him and His Son Jesus. God sent Paul to Athens. **Paul taught the people in Athens about the one true God.** God wants us to tell others about Him too. *How do people hear about Jesus? God uses Christians to tell others about Jesus.*

- 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 a picture of Jesus. Remind preschoolers that Jesus died on the cross and is alive. We can know God because of Jesus. Jesus brings us into God's family. Pray for the children.

SAY • God, thank You that You want people to know You and Your Son, Jesus. Thank You for giving us the mission to share the good news about Jesus with others. Help us tell everyone that Jesus died on the cross and is alive. 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*