

## Paul's Third Journey

**BIBLE PASSAGE:** Acts 18:1-4,24-28; 20:17-38

**MAIN POINT:** God helped Paul preach with courage even when he was in danger.

**KEY PASSAGE:** Acts 1:8

**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** How do people hear about Jesus? God uses Christians to tell others about Jesus so they may repent and be saved.

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## Leader BIBLE STUDY

Paul's third missionary journey was unlike his first two because he didn't set out to plant churches. Instead, his mission was to encourage and strengthen existing churches. Paul wrote letters to the churches, but he knew some guidance was best given in person.

Paul's journey began when he traveled to the city of Corinth. To make a living, Paul was a tentmaker. Paul became friends with two other tentmakers in Corinth: a man named Aquila and his wife, Priscilla. In his business dealings, Paul was able to share the gospel with many people. The church in Corinth grew.

Paul took Aquila and Priscilla with him to Ephesus. Ephesus was a thriving city in the Roman Empire. Aquila and Priscilla stayed in Ephesus while Paul traveled to others churches and encouraged the believers. While Paul traveled, Aquila and Priscilla interacted with a Jewish believer named Apollos. Apollos was a leader in the early church, and Aquila and Priscilla helped him better understand about Jesus and the Scriptures. Apollos went on to greatly help other believers by showing through Scripture that Jesus is the Messiah.

The Holy Spirit led Paul to go to Jerusalem. This wasn't an easy call to obey. The Spirit revealed to Paul that imprisonment and suffering awaited in Jerusalem. (See Acts 20:23.) Hadn't Paul done enough? He had spent years preaching the gospel, and many people believed. Wasn't now a good time for Paul to retire comfortably on a beach somewhere?

But Paul did not cling to his own life. He used every opportunity to tell people the good news about Jesus and to help the church. God helped Paul preach with courage even when he was in danger. Paul was dedicated to Jesus, who called him to do the work of sharing the gospel. Paul boarded the ship to Jerusalem, uncertain of the future but certain of the goodness and grace of the Lord Jesus.



# The BIBLE STORY

## Bible Storytelling Tips

## Paul's Third Journey

*Acts 18:1-4,24-28; 20:17-38*

- **Display a map:**

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

- **Move around:** Tell the story while slowly moving back and forth at the front of the room to simulate the many miles Paul walked during his journey.

**Paul traveled from Athens to the city of Corinth. There he met a Jewish man named Aquila (uh KWIL uh) and his wife, Priscilla.** They were tentmakers, and so was Paul, so **Paul stayed with them** and worked with them. **On the Sabbath days, Paul went to the synagogue to talk to the Jews and Greeks. He tried to persuade them to believe in Jesus. Some of the people believed, and the church grew in Corinth.**

**Paul traveled with his friends Aquila and Priscilla from Corinth to Ephesus (EF uh suhs). Aquila and Priscilla stayed in Ephesus while Paul visited churches throughout Asia. Paul helped the believers in the cities grow stronger in their faith.**

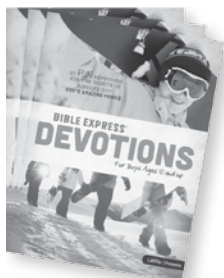
**While Paul was traveling, a Jew named Apollos (uh PAHL uhs) came to Ephesus.** Apollos knew the Scriptures well. **Apollos liked to tell people about Jesus,** and what he taught was true. **But he did not understand everything about Jesus, so Priscilla and Aquila** took him to their home and **explained more to him. Apollos traveled and taught others, using the Scriptures to show that Jesus is the Messiah.**

**Now Paul traveled back toward Ephesus. He decided not to stop in Ephesus, but he asked the leaders of the church there to meet him in a nearby city. Paul said to them, "I am obeying the Spirit and am going to sail to Jerusalem. I do not know what will happen to me there, but I know that trouble and jail wait for me. I do not care about my own life. The most important thing is that I finish the work Jesus gave me to do. I want to tell people**

the good news of God's grace.”

**Paul and the church leaders prayed together**, and they cried because they knew they might never see Paul again. **Then they went with him to the ship to say goodbye.**

*Christ Connection: As Paul traveled on his third missionary journey, he used every opportunity to tell people the good news about Jesus and to help the church. Paul was dedicated to Jesus, who called him to do the work of sharing the gospel.*



**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](http://www.lifeway.com/devotionals).

# Introduce the STORY

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## 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 talk about something they did this week even though it was hard or they didn't want to do it.

## Activity page (5 minutes)

- "Third Journey Word Search" activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Invite kids to complete the "Third Journey Word Search" on the activity page. Challenge kids to circle the words hidden in the puzzle.

**SAY** • Do you recognize any of these names? Today we are going to hear about some places the apostle Paul visited and about some of the people he met as he traveled to share the gospel.

## Session starter (10 minutes)

**OPTION 1:** Worth it!

Use tape to mark a line across the room. Use pieces of tape to mark the halfway point on the line and to mark the one-quarter and three-quarters distances.

Prepare signs to display along the parts of the line.



LOW PREP

- paper
- markers
- painter's tape or masking tape

*Definitely* (start); *Probably* (one-quarter); *Maybe* (halfway); *Probably Not* (three-quarters); *Definitely Not* (end).

Explain that for each statement you read, kids should stand on the line to indicate whether or not they would do what the statement says.

1. Eat a tuna pickle burger to make your friend laugh.
2. Skip a party to help a grandparent do yardwork.
3. Skip recess to help a friend with math homework.
4. Travel 8 hours to visit your favorite theme park.
5. Do extra chores to earn more screen time.
6. Sit with a new kid at lunch.
7. Face pain and suffering to tell others about Jesus.

**SAY** • Did anyone have a hard time deciding if you would do that last one? As we will see in today's Bible story, following Jesus isn't easy—but it is worth it!

### **OPTION 2:** Courage ahead

Invite kids to stand. Explain that you will read a scenario, and they will show you with movement how they would react. Allow a moment for kids to respond to each situation.

- You jump into a pool with your eyes closed.
- You walk into a dark room.
- You hear something outside of your camping tent.
- You walk into a crowded room of strangers.
- You step into a muddy lake.

**SAY** • How do you feel going into something when you don't know the outcome? In today's Bible story, Paul wasn't sure what was ahead of Him, but He knew God would be with him. We will hear about Paul's courageous journey soon.

Option: Between each statement, allow volunteers to explain their choices.

Tip: Instruct kids to avoid colliding with other kids.

Option: Choose volunteers to describe in each scenario what they might be afraid of.

## **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  
• large globe

*[Leader enters wearing a white outfit: white pants, white shirt or jacket, and a white hat. Leader is carrying a large globe.]*

**LEADER** • Hello, my friends! Thank you for being here. I am excited to report that I have returned from my final ocean expedition to the great Atlantic! *[Point out on the globe the location of the Atlantic Ocean.]*

The Atlantic Ocean is in the space from North and South America to Europe and Africa. It is the second largest ocean, after the Pacific. The Equator divides the Atlantic Ocean into the North Atlantic Ocean and the South Atlantic Ocean. Now let's talk about Paul, another great sea traveler, and what happened on his third missionary journey.

## Big picture question (1 minute)

**LEADER** • Paul dedicated his life to telling people about Jesus. Let's say our big picture question and answer

together: *How do people hear about Jesus? God uses Christians to tell others about Jesus so they may repent and be saved.*

## Giant timeline (1 minute)

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

• Giant Timeline or Big Story Circle

**LEADER** • By the time Paul took his third missionary journey, about 20 years had passed since Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead.

Believers gathered as the early church and took the good news of the gospel to people in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria. As a Christian missionary, Paul traveled thousands of miles and regularly faced pain and suffering. But God's plan for Paul wasn't over.

Last time we heard about Paul in Athens. **Paul taught the people in Athens that the one true God sent Jesus to be the Savior.** Let's find out where Paul went next.

## Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Acts 18:1-4,24-28; 20:17-38. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video "Paul's Third Journey."

• Bibles  
• "Paul's Third Journey" video  
• Big Picture Question Poster  
• Bible Story Picture Poster

**LEADER** • Paul's third missionary journey took him from Corinth to Ephesus, and then to many places throughout Asia, including Troas (TROH az). Then Paul went back to Ephesus before heading to Jerusalem.

In Corinth, Paul met a husband and wife—Aquila and Priscilla. They were Jewish tentmakers. Paul was



a tentmaker too. Paul preached in the synagogue on the Sabbath, and the rest of the week he made some money by working with Aquila and Priscilla. Paul was in Corinth for a year and a half. Many people—Jews and Gentiles—heard the gospel and believed.

When it was time for Paul to travel back toward Jerusalem, Aquila and Priscilla went with him until they got to Ephesus. They stayed in Ephesus while Paul visited some churches throughout Asia.

Now this is interesting: Aquila and Priscilla met someone in Ephesus named Apollos. He was a Jewish preacher and a disciple of John the Baptist. He knew about Jesus, but he did not understand the gospel. Aquila and Priscilla told Apollos more about Jesus, and he believed. Then Apollos started preaching about Jesus, and many people believed!

After some time, Paul met with the church leaders in Ephesus to say goodbye. He was going to Jerusalem. Paul knew he would face hardships there, but he was willing to suffer so that others would hear the good news about Jesus. ***How do people hear about Jesus? God uses Christians to tell others about Jesus so they may repent and be saved.***

Note: You may use this opportunity to 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 used every opportunity to tell people the good news about Jesus and to help the church. God blessed Paul's work. **God helped Paul preach with courage even when he was in danger.** The Bible says that because of Paul's work, everyone in Asia heard the truth about God. [*See Acts 19:10.*]

God changed people's hearts, and many people

who heard the gospel believed and were saved. Paul encouraged believers to follow God and live lives that honor Him. Paul was dedicated to Jesus, who called him to do the work of sharing the gospel.

### **Key passage (5 minutes)**

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together Acts 1:8.

- Key Passage Poster
- “To the End of the Earth” song

**LEADER** • We’ve seen in our Bible stories how the good news about Jesus spread from Jerusalem to Judea and Samaria—and beyond. As Paul traveled on his third missionary journey, he used every opportunity to tell people the good news about Jesus and to help the church. This wasn’t easy, but **God helped Paul preach with courage even when he was in danger.**

Jesus didn’t just give us a mission and leave us on our own. He sent the Holy Spirit to give us power. The same power that raised Jesus from the dead lives inside every believer. Let’s sing.

Lead boys and girls in singing “To the End of the Earth.”

### **Discussion starter video (4 minutes)**

**LEADER** • Paul was willing to go everywhere God led him to go, even when he knew he would face suffering. Where would you be willing to go for God? Think about that as you watch this video.

- “Unit 30, Session 6” discussion starter video

Show the “Unit 30, Session 6” discussion starter video.

Then lead kids to discuss the following questions:

- Do you think there is anywhere God wouldn’t want believers to go?
- How can we know God is calling us to do something?

- What can we do if God asks us to do something scary?

**LEADER** • God calls us to share the gospel where we are and wherever God takes us.

### **Sing (4 minutes)**

• “A Mission from Above”  
song

**LEADER** • *How do people hear about Jesus? God uses Christians to tell others about Jesus so they may repent and be saved.* We want to make Jesus known to the whole world. Let’s sing.  
Sing together “A Mission from Above.”

### **Pray (2 minutes)**

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to apply the story.

**LEADER** • Lord God, help us to trust Your plan even when we feel uncomfortable. We believe that You are good and in control. Use us to take the good news of Jesus to all the nations. 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
- chalkboard or large piece of paper
- chalk or marker

Form two teams of kids. Show the key passage poster. Lead each group to say the key passage together. Then instruct kids to stand at one side of the room. Display a chalkboard or large piece of paper at the other side of the room.

Give the first player in each line a marker or a piece of chalk. When you say “go,” the first player should race to the board and write the first word of the verse. Then he will return to his team and give the chalk to the next player. She should run to the board and write the next word. Kids will continue the relay until both teams finish the verse. Gently correct any mistakes.

**SAY** • Today we learned that **God helped Paul preach with courage even when he was in danger.** Paul was never alone. God gives believers the Holy Spirit to help them do His work to take the gospel to all nations.

## Bible story review & Bible skills (10 minutes)

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Main Point Poster
- pencil
- paper

Form two groups of kids. Instruct kids to open their Bibles to Acts 18. Give each kid a pencil and piece of paper. Before each review question, read the Bible reference and

encourage kids to read it to find the answer. Instruct kids to list the answer on their papers. After each question, choose a volunteer to share her answer.

1. Where did Paul go after he left Athens? (*Corinth, Acts 18:1*)
2. What was the occupation of Aquila and his wife Priscilla? (*tentmakers, Acts 18:2-3*)
3. Where did Paul go every Sabbath? (*to the synagogue, Acts 18:4*)
4. Whom did Aquila and Priscilla meet in Ephesus? (*Apollos, Acts 18:24-26*)
5. Paul met with the church leaders from what city? (*Ephesus, Acts 20:17*)
6. The Holy Spirit led Paul toward what city? (*Jerusalem, Acts 20:22*)
7. What did the Holy Spirit tell Paul was waiting for him in Jerusalem? (*chains and afflictions, Acts 20:23*)
8. What did Paul say is the most important thing? (*to finish the work that Jesus gave him to do, to share the gospel; Acts 20:24*)

**SAY** • The Holy Spirit led Paul to go to Jerusalem. Paul knew he would face suffering in Jerusalem, but he still obeyed God. **God helped Paul preach with courage even when he was in danger.** Paul used every opportunity to tell people the good news about Jesus and to help the church.

## Activity choice (10 minutes)

**OPTION 1:** Around the World basketball (Round 3)

Hang a small basketball hoop or position an empty trash can against one wall. Use masking tape or painter's tape to mark five Xs on the floor in a semi-circle around the hoop, a

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



- empty trash can or basketball hoop
- paper wad or basketball
- masking tape or painter's tape

Option: Label some of the spots corresponding to places on Paul's journey: *Corinth, Asia, Ephesus, Jerusalem.*

Tip: If your group is small, play with one team and challenge kids to move around the arc as many times as they can.

few feet from the basket. Form two teams and instruct kids how to play.

1. The first player from team 1 will attempt to score a basket from the first *X*. If she scores, she moves to the next *X*. The shooter continues until she misses.
2. Then the next player from team 1 resumes at the *X* that was last shot from. Continue until all the players on team 1 have had a turn.
3. Each time the team moves around the arc, award 25 points and continue play from the first *X*.
4. Each time the arc is completed, encourage kids to stand a little farther behind the *X* to shoot. Then allow team 2 to play.

**SAY** • As Paul traveled on his third journey—in Corinth, Asia, and Ephesus—he used every opportunity to tell people the good news about Jesus and to help the church. ***How do people hear about Jesus? God uses Christians to tell others about Jesus so they may repent and be saved.***

#### **OPTION 2:** Facing resistance

Before the session, tightly wrap a candy bar in wrapping paper. Use generous amounts of tape and wrap the candy bar in multiple layers so it is difficult to open. Guide kids to stand in a circle. Give one kid the wrapped candy bar. Play music and instruct kids to pass the candy around the circle.

When you pause the music, the kid holding the candy may begin unwrapping it. The rest of the kids should count down from five. When they reach zero, start the music again. Kids should resume passing the candy.

Continue to pause the music, allowing kids five-second intervals to unwrap the candy before resuming to pass it

- Allergy Alert download
- candy bar
- wrapping paper
- tape
- “A Mission from Above” song
- individually wrapped candies (optional)

around the circle. Play until kids remove all the wrapping paper. You may choose to provide individually wrapped candies for kids to take home.

**SAY** • Unwrapping that candy was not an easy task, but you worked so hard! You knew that the reward waiting for you was greater than any difficulty you would face to get it. In our Bible story today, **God helped Paul preach with courage even when he was in danger.** Paul looked forward to the day when he would experience his reward: eternal life with Jesus. We can dedicate our lives to making Jesus known because any suffering we face in this life doesn't compare to the joy that waits for us in eternity.

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

## 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 for missionaries around the world who risk everything to spread the gospel.

As time allows, lead kids to complete "Mark the Way III" on the activity page. Kids should unscramble the clues to draw the route of Paul's third missionary journey.

- pencils
- Journal Page
- "Mark the Way III" 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.