

Paul's Third Journey

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

MAIN POINT: God helped Paul preach with courage.

KEY PASSAGE: Acts 1:8

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

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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.



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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.
- **Sit in a tent:** Make a tent in the classroom with a sheet. Invite preschoolers to sit in the tent while you tell the Bible story. Remind children that Paul was a tentmaker.

God sent Paul to the city of Corinth. Paul met a man and his wife, Aquila (uh KWIL uh) and Priscilla. Their job was making tents. Paul made tents too. Paul stayed with them and worked with them. On the Sabbath, Paul went to the synagogue to talk to the people who lived in the city. He told them about Jesus. Some of the people believed. Now the church was in Corinth too.

Paul and his new friends, Aquila and Priscilla, went to the city of Ephesus (EF uh suhs). Aquila and Priscilla stayed there, and Paul traveled all around to visit churches. Paul met with believers at the churches and helped them.

While Paul traveled, a man named Apollos (uh PAHL uhs) came to Ephesus. Apollos told people about Jesus. He knew what was true about Jesus, but he did not understand everything. So Aquila and Priscilla taught him more. Then Apollos traveled and taught more people about Jesus, and he told them that Jesus is the Messiah.

Now Paul traveled back toward Ephesus. He asked the church leaders to meet him nearby. Paul told them that God wanted him to go to the city of Jerusalem. "I do not know what will happen there," Paul said, "but I know there will be trouble. I will be put in prison."

But this did not stop Paul. He knew that the most important thing was not having an easy life; the most important thing was to do the work God had for him. "I want to tell people the good news about Jesus," he said.

**The church leaders prayed with Paul and said
goodbye.**

Christ Connection: As Paul traveled, he told as many people as he could about Jesus. God changed people's hearts, and the church grew. God called Paul to tell people the good news about Jesus, and Paul wanted to follow God's plan no matter what.



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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

- "Hidden Picture" activity page, 1 per child
- pencils or crayons

Invite preschoolers to use the key to find the objects hidden in the picture.

SAY • In today's Bible story, Paul continued to travel around encouraging the churches and spreading the gospel, the good news about Jesus. Paul had some hard news to share with the church leaders about where God wanted him to go next. Listen to our Bible story to hear where God was sending Paul and what would be waiting for Paul when he arrived.

Play "Who Is My Friend?"

Explain to preschoolers that you will say a statement describing one of the children in the group. After each statement say, "Who is my friend?" Preschoolers will guess the child you are describing. Say additional statements



describing the child until the child is named. Allow older preschoolers to take turns describing their friends.

SAY • God is so kind to give us friends. The best kind of friends are those who follow Jesus, too. Following Jesus is not easy. We need friends who are also believers to encourage us, remind us about Jesus, and help us do the work of spreading the good news. In today's Bible story, Paul learned he was going to have to do something very hard. The other church leaders loved Paul and prayed for him.

Make a tent

Provide large sheets and invite preschoolers to make tents. Preschoolers may simply drape the sheets over chairs or tables. Consider hanging a string between two walls. Make sure the string is secure. Help preschoolers drape a sheet over the string to create a tent. Provide pillows and books to fill the tents.

- large sheets
- string (optional)

SAY • We have been learning a lot about Paul these last few weeks, but did you know that Paul had a job? Paul made tents. In today's Bible story, Paul made some new friends who were also tentmakers. Paul stayed with them and worked with them. Listen for how these new friends helped spread the gospel, the good news about Jesus.

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 preschooler to give their friends (everyone) high-fives as they move to Bible study.

- countdown video (optional)

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

Define *courage* for preschoolers as being strong when you have to do something very hard or scary.

Introduce the Bible story

Tell preschoolers about a time you had to be courageous and how God helped you.

SAY • Courage is different for Christians than for people who are not Christians. God gives us the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit gives us courage. We never have to do hard things on our own. Listen to hear how God helped Paul be courageous in today's Bible story.

Watch or tell the Bible story

Place a bookmark at Acts 18 in your Bible. Invite a preschooler to open it. Reverently display the open Bible.

SAY • The Bible is the most special book there is because it has God's words in it. The stories in the Bible really happened. Today's Bible story comes from 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 good news about Jesus was spreading through many different people. **God helped Paul preach with courage** while he did hard things. Paul knew

- Bible
- bookmark
- "Paul's Third Journey" video (optional)
- Bible Story Picture Poster

- Main Point Poster
- Giant Timeline or Big Story Circle

telling people the good news about Jesus was more important than having an easy life.

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

1. How did Aquila and Priscilla help Apollos? (*They taught him more about Jesus.*)
2. Where did God want Paul to go? (*Jerusalem*)
3. What would happen to Paul in Jerusalem? (*He would be put in prison.*)
4. What was more important to Paul: having an easy life or doing the work God had for him? (*doing the work God had for him*)
5. What was the work God had for Paul? (*telling people the good news about Jesus*)

Learn the big picture question

SAY • Our big picture question is, *How do people hear about Jesus? God uses Christians to tell others about Jesus.* God called Paul to tell people the good news about Jesus, and He calls us to do the same. Telling people about Jesus will sometimes be very hard, but following God’s plan is better than having an easy life. Jesus promises to always be with us.

• 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 • Paul was a witness for Jesus. He told as many people as he could about Jesus. We are to be witnesses for Jesus, too, sharing the good news with others.

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

Transition to experience the story

Experience THE STORY

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Play telephone

Play the telephone game. Invite preschoolers to sit in a circle. Whisper in one child's ear a simple truth such as "Jesus is God's Son" or "Jesus died on the cross and is alive." Guide her to tell the truth to the friend on her left. Preschoolers continue telling the good news until every child has heard it.

SAY • Paul traveled and told as many people as he could about Jesus. While Paul traveled, Aquila and Priscilla taught Apollos more about Jesus. Then Apollos traveled and taught more people about Jesus. God changed people's hearts, and the church grew. ***How do people hear about Jesus? God uses Christians to tell others about Jesus.*** God wants to use us to share the good news about Jesus!

Play a review game

Tape the Bible Story Picture Posters for unit 30 to the floor in a grid. Use tape to create a line on the floor a few feet away from the posters. Lead preschoolers to line up behind the tape line. Invite a preschooler to toss a beanbag toward the posters. Ask him to tell what he remembers from the Bible story depicted in the picture on which the beanbag

- Bible Story Picture Posters for unit 30
- tape
- beanbag

landed. If the beanbag did not land on a picture, use the poster closest to where it landed.

SAY • We have learned a lot about how God used Paul to take the gospel to many places. **God helped Paul preach with courage.** Paul told as many people as he could about Jesus. God changed people's hearts, and the church grew. God called Paul to tell people the good news about Jesus, and Paul wanted to follow God's plan no matter what.

Make friendship bracelets

Lead preschoolers to cut colorful drinking straws into pieces and string the pieces onto a chenille stem. When a preschooler has finished stringing straw pieces, show her how to twist the ends together to form a bracelet. Be sure sharp edges are bent back. Invite her to give her bracelet to a friend.

SAY • What friend are you going to give your friendship bracelet to? Paul became friends with Priscilla and Aquila in today's Bible story. Then Priscilla and Aquila became friends with Apollos. The church leaders loved Paul and prayed for him. **God helped Paul preach with courage.**

- colorful drinking straws
- chenille stems
- blunt-tipped scissors

Tip: Make a bracelet for each preschooler before the session to ensure every child gets a bracelet from a "friend."

Make cards for Christian prisoners

Identify an organization that ministers to persecuted Christians and distributes letters of encouragement to Christian prisoners. Read and follow the guidelines the organization lays out for sending letters to prisoners.

Set out construction paper, stickers, and markers or crayons for preschoolers to make and decorate cards. Write "I am praying for you!" on each card. Take time to pray

- construction paper
- stickers
- markers or crayons
- large mailing envelope

for the prisoners who will receive preschoolers' cards. Place all the cards in a large mailing envelope to mail to the delivering organization.

SAY • God wanted Paul to go to the city of Jerusalem. He knew that he would be put in prison there. **God helped Paul preach with courage.** Paul knew that having an easy life was not the most important thing; the most important thing was to do the work God had for him. Today there are Christians in prison just because they love and follow Jesus. We can pray for them and encourage them.

Float boats

- clean, small plastic containers
- large plastic tub
- towels
- plastic people figures

Gather an assortment of clean, small plastic containers such as yogurt cups, margarine tubs, plastic cups, and so forth. Fill a plastic tub with a few inches of water. Place the tub on a flat surface covered with a towel. Invite preschoolers to experiment to determine which containers float the best and hold the most plastic people figures.

SAY • Paul got on a boat to Jerusalem. Before he got on the boat, the church leaders prayed with him and said goodbye. **God helped Paul preach with courage.** Paul knew that having an easy life was not the most important thing; the most important thing was to do the work God had for him. God called Paul to tell people the good news about Jesus, and Paul wanted to follow God's plan no matter what.

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 graham crackers for snack. Invite preschoolers to lean two graham crackers against each other to form a tent. Remind preschoolers that Paul worked with Aquila and Priscilla making tents. On the Sabbath, Paul went to the synagogue to talk to the people about Jesus. ***How do people hear about Jesus? God uses Christians to tell others about Jesus.*** We may not be able to travel around like Paul, but we can tell people about Jesus right here where we are.

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

Transition

When a child finishes her snack, guide her to throw away any trash. She 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 a time they can tell someone about Jesus. Sometimes telling people about Jesus is easy, but sometimes it is hard. **God helped Paul preach with courage**, and He will help us too. Pray for the children.

SAY • God, help us to tell as many people as we can about Jesus. Remind us the most important thing is to do the work You have for us. Help us to follow Your plan no matter what. 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*