



UNIT 35 | SESSION 4

PAUL WENT TO ROME

ACTS 27–28

KEY PASSAGE:

Isaiah 25:1

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

Why should we praise Jesus? We should praise Jesus for what He has done to provide our salvation and because He will one day make all things right.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

Paul trusted God to keep His promise to rescue him from the storm. He encouraged the sailors to trust and obey God too. God calls us to trust in His Son, Jesus, who died to rescue us from sin and death, and to invite others to believe this good news as well.



LEADER Bible Study

In today's passage, we read of the troublesome conditions Paul and his shipmates experienced on their way to Rome. From troubles with the weather and waters to issues with others aboard the ship, the men's hope of survival was fading quickly. Even still, Paul believed in God's promise to keep him safe on his mission to proclaim the gospel in that great city.

What lessons about perseverance can we glean from this passage? How does God reveal His faithfulness to His people throughout their time aboard this dangerous ship?

So much seemed to be working against Paul in these passages. To begin with, the purpose of this trip was to appeal to the highest powers in the Roman courts against his unfair arrest and condemnation from the Jewish elite. It was in these dire circumstances that God revealed he would safely arrive to proclaim the gospel there. However, the esteemed apostle and his shipmates were not met with smooth sailing.

They battled terrible conditions from all sides—stormy winds that wouldn't cooperate, brutal winter weather that wouldn't let up, an inability to eat for days on end, and no means of securing direction from the sun or stars. Some of the sailors had even plotted

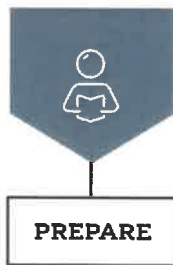
an escape from this dire situation at hand, hopelessly believing they could not be saved from their circumstances.

Through it all, Paul took on a leadership role on the ship, giving advice as to how they could avoid great loss by not going forward from Crete as planned. Although the men didn't listen, Paul was later able to give other encouragement to his peers, sharing with them the words that an angel had spoken to him: "Don't be afraid." Paul trusted in His Savior Jesus to continue the work and mission He had begun in the apostle's life and knew that God could be trusted.

Consider all the things working against Paul in just this chapter alone. Then, reflect on the God who had revealed His great plans for the apostle. Pray for God to grant the same miraculous gift of faith to you and to your group as you relay this incredible story of God's faithfulness, no matter the storm.

PLACES TO KNOW

Rome: a significant center of influence where Paul wanted to preach the gospel and share the Christian faith to reach more people and strengthen the early Christian community



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



Activity Page

- ☐ “Connect It” activity page

Session Starter (Option 1)

- ☐ painter’s tape
- ☐ hula hoops, 1 per group

Session Starter (Option 2)

- ☐ pool noodles, 4
- ☐ long pieces of rope, 4



Introduce the Session

- ☐ countdown video

Big Picture Question

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- ☐ Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- ☐ “Paul Went to Rome” video
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ painter’s tape (optional)
- ☐ New Testament Mediterranean Map (optional)

Questions from Kids

- ☐ “Unit 35, Session 4” questions from kids video

Missions Moment

- ☐ “Catching a Vision” missions video

Key Passage Activity

- ☐ Key Passage Poster
- ☐ “I Will Exalt You (Isaiah 25:1)” song
- ☐ worship song of your choice (optional)
- ☐ beach balls, 1 per group



Review & Bible Skills

- ☐ Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



Activity Choice (Option 1)

- ☐ “Southeast Asia Flags” printable, 1 per pair

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- ☐ poster papers, 2
- ☐ construction paper

Reflection and Prayer

- ☐ Bible Story Coloring Page (optional)



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

| SAY 🗨️ Have you ever competed in a challenge or competition? When? How did you do? 🗨️

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Connect It” on the activity page.

| SAY 🗨️ What did your dot-to-dot challenge reveal? **[Allow responses.]** Today, we will learn how Paul sailed to Rome and experienced the challenges of the sea. 🗨️

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

☐ OPTION 1: SHIPWRECK!



Before the session, use painter’s tape to create a start line and a finish line on the floor at opposite ends of the room. Form kids into groups of three or four and provide each group with a hula hoop. Explain that the hula hoop is a pretend “ship.” Lead groups to stand behind the start line. Tell kids that when you say “go” they must all hold on to the hula hoop and race toward the finish line. Explain that when you call out “shipwreck,” they must drop their hula hoop to the floor and all stand inside it. The last team to get inside their hula hoop is shipwrecked and is out. Continue playing until one team crosses the finish line. Play again as time allows.

| SAY 🗨️ Today, we will learn that as Paul sailed for Rome, he was shipwrecked. Let’s get ready to hear how God protected Paul and the other people on the ship. 🗨️

☐ OPTION 2: RESCUED

Before the session, create four “life preservers” by taping pool noodles into a circle and tying a long piece of rope to the circle. Form kids into two teams and choose two kids from each team to be the “Rescuers.” Scatter teams on opposite sides of the room. Give the “Rescuers” a life preserver and tell them they have 25 seconds to rescue as many kids as they can by throwing the life preserver to them and pulling them to safety. Explain that when kids are thrown a life preserver, they can grab it and walk to the “Rescuer.” The team that rescues the most kids in 25 seconds wins that round. Play additional rounds, choosing different kids to be the “Rescuers.”

| SAY 🗨️ Imagine how grateful you would be if you were really in need of rescue from being shipwrecked. In our Bible story, we’ll learn how Paul and his shipmates were in need of rescue when a storm broke their ship into pieces. Let’s get ready to learn how God rescued Paul and how He rescues us. 🗨️

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

- * Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “Hello, everyone. My name is [your name], and I am so glad you are here! I can’t wait to share our Bible story with you. Today, we will learn about more challenges Paul faced as he went to Rome. As we learn more about Paul’s challenges, we are reminded that we can trust God in every circumstance.

If you have your Bible, can you take it out? [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.] Our Bible story is found in the book of Acts. Acts is in the New Testament and is right after the four Gospels. Remember the word gospel means good news, and today we will hear some good news about how God rescued Paul.”

Worship

* Praise you anywhere.
* Good Good Father

* Offering

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

SAY “Can anyone remember our big picture question? [Allow responses.] Why should we praise Jesus? Let’s say the answer together: We should praise Jesus for what He has done to provide our salvation and because He will one day make all things right.

Today, our Bible story will tell us about how Paul and the other people on his ship needed to be saved from a terrible storm. But the truth is everyone needs to be saved. We may not need rescue from a storm, but we do need to be rescued from our sin. Only Jesus can save us. We must repent of our sin and believe in Jesus to be saved. We can praise Jesus for how He rescues us!”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “Last week, we learned that Paul continued to share the gospel while he was in prison. Paul shared Jesus with Felix and his wife, Festus, King Agrippa, and Queen Bernice while he waited in prison for over two years. Then Paul told Festus he wanted to go to Rome and have his case brought to Caesar. Paul hadn’t done anything wrong, but God used his imprisonment to get him to Rome. God had told Paul that He would send Paul to Rome to share Jesus with the people there. Today, we will see that Paul was on his way to Rome by ship when a terrible storm threatened his journey.”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story



1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Acts 27–28. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Paul Went to Rome.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

PAUL WENT TO ROME

“ Paul was a prisoner in Caesarea (cess uh REE uh). He had asked to see Caesar about his case. Caesar was the leader of the Roman Empire. So one day, Paul was put on a ship with other prisoners and soldiers going to Rome.

The journey was difficult. **As they sailed, strong winds and rain tossed the ship. The ship was blown off course.** No matter how hard they tried to steer the ship in the right direction, the wind was too strong. **For many days, they battled the storm.** The sailors threw things overboard to make the ship lighter. They were afraid the ship would break into pieces and they would drown in the deep sea.

One night, God sent an angel to Paul. The angel told Paul to not be afraid. God would save the lives of everyone on the ship. Paul told everyone on board what God had said. “Take courage,” he said. Paul believed everything would happen just like God said. The people on the ship would not die. They would have to run 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 listened to Paul. **In the morning, Paul told everyone it was time to eat.** They hadn’t eaten in about two weeks and were very hungry. **He thanked God and broke the bread, and everyone ate.** Then they sailed closer to the island.

When the ship got close to the island of Malta, the sailors raised the sails and headed toward the island. As the ship got close, **it struck a sandbar and stopped. The waves crashed into the ship, and it began to break into pieces. An army officer ordered everyone to swim for shore.** Those who could not swim clung to the planks and pieces of the ship. **They all made it safely to shore. Paul was right; God saved all of their lives.**

Christ Connection: Paul trusted God to keep His promise to rescue him from the storm. He encouraged the sailors to trust and obey God too. God calls us to trust in His Son, Jesus, who died to rescue us from sin and death, and to invite others to believe this good news as well. ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Imagine it: Create the shape of a boat on the floor using painter’s tape. Invite kids to climb in the “boat” and act out the story by swaying during the storm, eating, and listening as the crew does.

Map it out: Use the New Testament Mediterranean Map to show the path from Caesarea (F9) to Rome (B1).



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ Paul finally made the trip to Rome by ship. The journey was difficult and challenging but God’s timing is perfect. Why was the journey challenging? **[Allow responses.]** As Paul and the other prisoners sailed to Rome, they battled storms. The storms were so strong. The wind was so great that the ship was blown away from the direction they needed to sail. Everyone on board the ship was afraid.

But even in the midst of the terrible storm, God was with Paul and He sent an angel to encourage him. What did the angel tell Paul? **[Allow responses.]** The angel told Paul to ‘take courage’ because no one on the ship would die. Paul believed everything would happen just like God said. And during difficulty, Paul thanked God, listened to God’s words, and trusted God to keep His promise to rescue them from the storm.

God did rescue everyone on the ship from the storm! Even though the ship broke apart, everyone was saved. God rescued Paul and his shipmates, and God rescues us through His Son, Jesus. Like Paul, we can trust God and believe in Jesus who saves us from sin and death. ”

3 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “ Paul trusted God to keep His promise to rescue him from the storm. He encouraged the sailors to trust and obey God too. God calls us to trust in His Son, Jesus, who died to rescue us from sin and death, and to invite others to believe this good news as well. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 35, Session 4” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Is God always protecting us? Why?
2. How can you encourage others to trust in God when they might be afraid?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

SAY “ God is at work in Southeast Asia as young Korean missionaries have traveled there to tell others about Jesus. Some of these missionaries feel called to short-term missions, while others desire to return as full-time missionaries. They want to share the hope of the gospel with people who have never heard about Jesus. Like Paul, they want to tell people how Jesus saves us from our sin. ”

Play the missions video. Close in prayer, asking God to give these young missionaries courage, boldness, and wisdom as they share the good news. Pray that many people in Southeast Asia will hear the gospel and believe in Jesus.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Isaiah 25:1 together.

SAY 🗣️ We may have heard about a storm in our story today, but when it's not stormy, playing in the water at the pool or at the beach is super fun. Let's practice our key passage today by passing beach balls as we say it aloud. 🎈

Form kids into groups of four or five and provide each group with a beach ball. Direct kids to each say a word from the key passage while they toss the beach ball to one another. After a couple of minutes, invite kids to form one large circle and lead them to all say the verse aloud while they pass multiple beach balls around the circle.

Lead kids to sing "I Will Exalt You (Isaiah 25:1)." You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

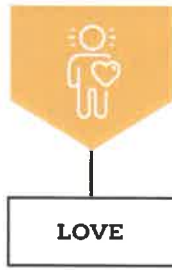
7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY 🗣️ Lord, we praise Your name. Thank You for all that You have done for us. Thank You for rescuing us from our sin through Your Son, Jesus. Help us remain obedient and faithful like Paul through any challenge we may face. Amen. 🙏

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the New Testament Mediterranean Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Acts 27. Explain that we learn a lot about Paul in the book of Acts. Tell kids that Paul wrote more books of the New Testament than any other writer. Name some of the books that Paul wrote such as Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, and so on.

Consider pointing out the location of Malta (E1) where Paul's ship crashed on the New Testament Mediterranean Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Acts 27:25 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verse aloud.

SAY 🗨️ Paul truly believed everything would happen just like God said. The people on the ship would not die. God would save them and provide the safety they needed.

How does God save us? **[Allow responses.]** God saves us through faith in Jesus. When we trust in Jesus, we are rescued from the death our sin deserves. Jesus forgives our sin and gives us new life. We have the promise of living forever with Him. 🗨️

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY 🗨️ How did God show He was with Paul during the storm? How is God with us? 🗨️

Remind kids that God sent an angel to give Paul a message and to tell him to be courageous. Explain that Paul believed God's words and trusted that God would do what He said. Share that God is with us through Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Explain that God shows He is with us when He speaks to us through the Bible, listens to our prayers, and helps us when we ask.

SAY 🗨️ Even while Paul faced a scary storm, he thanked God. Why can we give thanks to God at any time? 🗨️

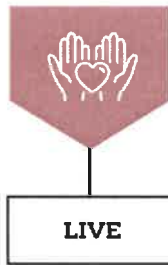
Discuss how giving thanks to God is one way we praise Him and recognize that He has done so much for us. Invite kids to share what God has done for them. Lead kids to understand that giving thanks isn't just about what we receive from God but also about who God is. Tell kids that we can thank God that He is good, kind, merciful, holy, and forgiving. Remind kids we can thank Him for Jesus who saves us from sin and death.

SAY 🗨️ Paul encouraged the people on the ship to trust in God and His promise to save them. How can you encourage others to trust in God? 🗨️

Answers will vary. Discuss how we can encourage others in many ways as we remind them of God's love for them and how He has made a way for all things to be made new. Tell kids that sharing the hope of the gospel is the best way to encourage others to trust in Jesus.

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 **ACTIVITY CHOICE** (10 minutes)

☐ **OPTION 1: FLAGS MEMORY GAME**



Form kids into pairs and provide each pair with a “Southeast Asia Flags” printable and scissors. Lead kids to cut out each pair of flag cards. Then tell them to shuffle the cards and place them face down in rows. Tell kids they will take turns turning over any two cards (one at a time) to find a matching pair. Kids will keep the cards if they match. If they find a match, they get another turn. Tell kids that when they turn over two cards that do not match, those cards are turned face down again (in the same position) and it’s their partner’s turn. Play as time allows.

SAY “ These are the flags of some of the Southeast Asian countries we have been learning about. Like we heard today, many people in these countries have not heard the good news about Jesus. We can pray that God will send more missionaries to share with the people how Jesus saves us from sin. ”

☐ **OPTION 2: HOIST THE SAILS**

Before the session, gather two large sheets of poster paper and draw nine simple outlines of a boat with a mast on each poster. Draw the outlines in one long row. Then using construction paper, cut out two sets of nine triangles to act as the sails for the mast of the boats. Write one to three words from Romans 10:13 on each of the triangle pieces.

Form kids into two groups and provide each group with a Bible, a set of nine triangles, and tape. Lead groups to find Romans 10:13 in their Bibles. Challenge groups to tape the triangles on the boat masts in the correct order of the Bible verse. The first group to “hoist” all the sails in the correct order wins.

SAY “ Romans 10:13 reminds us that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. Jesus is the Lord who saves us from sin! Just as God saved Paul from the storm, Jesus saves us from our sin. ”

2 **REFLECTION AND PRAYER** (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.