

UNIT 35 | SESSION 5

PAUL PREACHED IN ROME

ACTS 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:

Being a prisoner in Rome did not stop Paul from sharing his faith. He continued to share the gospel even when people disagreed. The message about Jesus seems foolish to some, but everyone who trusts in Jesus will be saved.



LEADER Bible Study

Acts 28 finished out the nearly 30-year saga of Acts on a high note: Paul, by God's grace, was able to carry out two years of faithful ministry there in the great city of Rome. Despite the troublesome circumstances surrounding his entry and reputation before the Romans, God proved Himself faithful and demonstrated the power of His gospel.

How, through the book of Acts, might we glean a deeper understanding of God's work in the lives of His followers? What does Acts 28 teach us about God's kingdom?

This incredible book of the Bible detailed the earliest days of the church and how the Holy Spirit has remained at work in His people's lives, just as Christ promised. Here in the final chapter of Acts, we see the continued example of Paul's reliance on the Holy Spirit as he ministered to and healed those on the island of Malta, as well as his years spent boldly proclaiming the gospel to all who visited him amidst his imprisonment.

Against all odds, the apostle found himself in the city where not even a shipwreck, false accusation, or snakebite could impede his arrival or ministry. Paul's story in Acts ends with him being found faithful despite all that was stacked against him. Yet even his own faithfulness pales in comparison to the

faithfulness of the God who called him on this mission.

Luke set the context for this book in chapter 1, when he stated that the resurrected Christ appeared to His people and spoke about the kingdom of God, promising His Spirit to them as they witnessed to the world. We see Paul exemplify this Spirit-filled life on mission as a witness, declaring the truth of God's kingdom to all who'd listen—from slaves to kings. May we, too, be the witnesses we're called to be, especially to the boys and girls entrusted to us through these sessions centered around His love.

EVENTS TO KNOW

Paul Preached in Rome: Like the risen Christ on the road to Emmaus, Paul showed how both the Law of Moses and the Prophets pointed to Jesus as God's Messiah.



PREPARE

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.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- ☐ "Scrambled Words" activity page

Session Starter (Option 1)

- ☐ "Places Cube" printable
- ☐ "Places Cards" printable

Session Starter (Option 2)

- ☐ bandanas, 1 per pair
- ☐ painter's tape
- ☐ cones, 3



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- ☐ countdown video

Big Picture Question

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- ☐ Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- ☐ "Paul Preached in Rome" video
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ Bible time clothes (optional)

Questions from Kids

- ☐ "Unit 35, Session 5" questions from kids video

Missions Moment

- ☐ "Jeri Whitfield Photos" printable
- ☐ world map

Key Passage Activity

- ☐ Key Passage Poster
- ☐ "I Will Exalt You (Isaiah 25:1)" song
- ☐ worship song of your choice (optional)
- ☐ sticky notes



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- ☐ Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- ☐ "Places Cube" printable

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 “Who are people that teach you new things? How do they help you learn?”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Scrambled Words” on the activity page.

| SAY “These words can all be found in our Bible story today. Let’s get ready to hear how Paul continued to teach about Jesus while he was in Rome.”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

☐ OPTION 1: PLACES YOU GO



Before the session, print and prepare the “Places Cube” on cardstock. Then print the “Place Cards” on cardstock and tape them on different walls of the room.

Point out the different “Place Cards” around the room and lead kids to go stand beside one. Allow about 15 seconds for kids to find a place then roll the “Places Cube.” Kids beside the location rolled are out. Play as time allows and consider including commands for how they move around the room such as hopping, tip-toeing, crawling, etc. Consider choosing different kids to roll the cube as well. (Tip: Reuse the cube for the second Live Activity.)

| SAY “The places on the cube are locations familiar to us. We have neighborhoods, schools, stores, parks, and other places within our communities. You probably go to many of these places during the week. Any place we find ourselves is somewhere we can share the gospel. Today, we will learn that Paul shared the gospel in an unlikely place—under house arrest in Rome.”

☐ OPTION 2: TIED UP

Using painter’s tape, create three starting lines on the floor at one end of the room. At the opposite end of the room, place three cones. Form kids into pairs. Distribute bandanas and help kids secure their legs together for a three legged race. Direct each team to line up behind a start line. At the signal, challenge kids to race across the room, run around the plastic cone and back to the start line. The first team in each race to cross the line wins that round. Continue until all teams have raced, then challenge the winners of each race to race against each other until there is one ultimate winner.

| SAY “It would have been a lot easier to run the race if you were free from being tied to your partner. Today, we’ll learn that Paul was under house arrest in Rome and wasn’t free to go about as he pleased. A Roman soldier guarded him. But Paul didn’t let this stop him from sharing the good news.”

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





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 “Hi, kids! I’m [your name], and I’m so excited you are here today. We are continuing our study on the life of Paul. Last week, we learned how Paul survived a shipwreck but still had not made it to Rome.

Let’s take out our Bibles as we get ready to hear what happened after Paul made it to an island called Malta. [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.] Today, we will see how God was with Paul and gave him boldness to continue telling others about Jesus in Rome.”

Worship

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

** Praise You Anywhere * offering*
** way maker*
SAY “Let’s review our big picture question: Why should we praise Jesus? Let’s shout the answer together. [Allow responses.] We should praise Jesus for what He has done to provide our salvation and because He will one day make all things right.

Our story today teaches us that Paul always praised Jesus and spent time telling all who would listen about the salvation they can have through faith in Jesus. Paul did not let anything stop him, even when he was under house arrest.”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

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

SAY “Help me review the life of Paul. [Allow responses as you ask each question and point to the Bible stories as kids answer.] How was Paul saved? Paul was saved when he met Jesus on the road to Damascus. What did God call Paul to become? God called Paul to become a missionary. What did Paul do as a missionary? Paul told Jews and Gentiles about Jesus, and he started churches. After Paul’s three missionary journeys, he went back to Jerusalem. What happened to Paul in Jerusalem? He was arrested. While Paul was in prison waiting to go to Rome, who did he share Jesus with? Paul shared Jesus with Felix, Festus, King Agrippa and Queen Bernice. What happened to Paul when he was sailing to Rome? He was shipwrecked.

Paul’s life had many ups and downs. But no matter what, Paul trusted God and was faithful to share the gospel. Today, we will see how Paul shared Jesus with those who would listen while he was under house arrest in Rome.”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story



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

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

PAUL PREACHED IN ROME

“ Paul stayed on the island of Malta for three months after the ship he was on wrecked while traveling to Rome. Paul healed people who were sick and shared the good news about Jesus with them. The people on the island were grateful for Paul’s help. Finally, Paul and other prisoners got on another ship and continued their journey to Rome.

When the ship arrived in Rome, many people came to meet Paul. He was still a prisoner, but **instead of going to jail, Paul was allowed to live by himself in a house.** A soldier stayed with him to guard him.

On his third day in Rome, **Paul asked the Jewish leaders to come talk to him. Paul told them, “I haven’t done anything wrong. The Jews made me a prisoner in Jerusalem and handed me over to the Romans. The Romans wanted to let me go free, but the Jews objected. So I had to ask to speak to Caesar, the most important ruler in Rome. Still, I haven’t done anything wrong.”**

The Jewish leaders had not heard any reports about Paul doing wrong, but they wanted to hear more about what he believed. **They did know that Paul was a Christian, and they knew that many people did not agree with the teachings of people called Christians.**

So the leaders agreed on a day to meet with Paul. On that day, even more leaders came to hear what Paul had to say. **Paul taught all day about God’s kingdom. He pointed to the Scriptures—the Law and the Old Testament prophets—to explain that Jesus is the Messiah.** Some of the Jewish leaders agreed with Paul, but others didn’t.

For two whole years, Paul stayed in the house and welcomed everyone who wanted to hear about Jesus. He talked about God’s kingdom and about Jesus. He shared the good news of salvation. **Many people listened to Paul’s words and believed in Jesus.** Some were Jews, and others were not. The people were filled with joy and hope because they found new life in Jesus.

Paul never stopped teaching about Jesus. Even while he was a prisoner, he wrote letters to different churches to encourage them and remind them about God’s love. **Paul helped people and prayed for them. He trusted in God, and the good news spread throughout Rome and beyond.**

Christ Connection: Being a prisoner in Rome did not stop Paul from sharing his

STORYTELLING TIPS

Pretend to be Paul:
Dress as Paul and pretend to be him as you tell the story.

Celebrate it: Lead kids to cheer and clap their hands when they learn how some people believed the gospel.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

faith. He continued to share the gospel even when people disagreed. The message about Jesus seems foolish to some, but everyone who trusts in Jesus will be saved. ”

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY 🗨️ Paul had never been to Rome before, but when he arrived in Rome many people came to meet him. Paul had written a letter to the Christians in Rome when he was on his third missionary journey. Those who came to meet Paul were his brothers and sisters in Christ. Paul was so happy to see them and thanked God.

Then Paul called some of the Jewish leaders to meet with him. What did Paul tell them? **[Allow responses.]** Paul wanted to explain to them that he had done nothing wrong, and he wanted to share why he was in Rome. What did the Jewish leaders say to Paul? **[Allow responses.]** They asked him to share more about what he believed. They knew he was a Christian and they had heard people disagree with Christianity.

Paul told them about Jesus and how He is the Messiah the Old Testament promised. Did everyone agree with Paul? **[Allow responses.]** No, not everyone agreed. Even today, people may not agree with us when we tell them about Jesus. But we can share the good news trusting that some will hear and believe.

For two years Paul was under house arrest and continued to preach the good news about Jesus. Through Paul's preaching many people did trust in Jesus. Paul chose to be thankful and faithful while he was under arrest. We can be faithful like Paul and share the good news. ”

3 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY 🗨️ Being a prisoner in Rome did not stop Paul from sharing his faith. He continued to share the gospel even when people disagreed. The message about Jesus seems foolish to some, but everyone who trusts in Jesus will be saved. ”

(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 5” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. How do I know if I am saved?
2. Why do we have hope and joy, like Paul, when Jesus saves us from our sin?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Display the “Jeri Whitfield Photos” and point to Thailand on a world map as you tell kids about the missionary.

SAY 🗨️ Jeri Whitfield has served in Thailand as a missionary three different times. The first time, she was in her twenties and served for two years. Jeri later returned to Thailand as a career



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

missionary when she was in her forties. At age 55, Jeri experienced health issues. So, she made the difficult decision to take an early retirement and return to the United States. Now in her sixties, Jeri has again returned to the mission field in Thailand. 🙏

Tell kids that when Jeri first came to Thailand as a missionary, she looked up to the career missionaries serving there long-term. Share how she saw how the career missionaries were fully committed to God and the people they served. Tell kids that these missionaries were her role models for mission work as they told the good news about Jesus and discipled new believers. Pray for Jeri as she serves the people of Thailand for the third time as a missionary. Ask God to help people in Thailand hear and believe the gospel.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Before the session, use sticky notes to cover up words on the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Isaiah 25:1 together.

SAY 🙏 Let's try remembering the words of our key passage from memory. Paul knew the importance of God's Word and taught it to others. We can learn God's Word and teach it to others as well. 🙏

Challenge kids to recall the covered words. Once they recall the covered words, practice saying it aloud together a few times.

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)

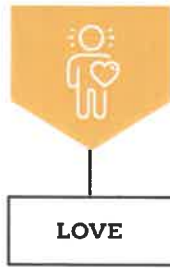
Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY 🙏 Lord, You deserve all our praise; we will exalt You. We will praise Your name, for You have accomplished wonders, plans formed long ago, with perfect faithfulness. Amen. 🙏

The Gospel - God's Plan for us Slide

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 28. Consider pointing out the location of Rome (B1) on the New Testament Mediterranean Map. Tell kids that Rome became the place where the gospel would be taken to many other parts of the world by the people who heard Paul share the gospel and believed in Jesus. Share that while Paul was under house arrest in Rome, he wrote the letters Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon.

Choose a volunteer to read aloud Acts 28:23-24 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verses aloud.

SAY 🗨️ For a whole day, Paul taught the Jewish leaders from the Old Testament about the Messiah God promised. Jesus is the Messiah God promised would save the world from sin. Some believed in Jesus, but others did not.

The message about Jesus seems foolish to some, but everyone who trusts in Jesus will be saved. We share the good news about Jesus, trusting that God will be faithful to help others hear and believe. 🗨️

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY 🗨️ If someone came to you and asked you about Jesus, what would you tell him? 🗨️

Answers will vary. Discuss how Paul knew the Scriptures and the stories of the Bible. Share how Paul knew the Bible is one big story that points to the Messiah—Jesus. Help kids think about how they can share God’s plan to save sinners by sending Jesus into the world. Ask kids to share the key components of the gospel using the Gospel Plan Poster.

SAY 🗨️ How should you respond if people don’t believe in Jesus when you share about Him? 🗨️

Answers will vary. Point out how Paul didn’t get angry or mad. Tell kids that Paul also didn’t stop sharing the good news when people didn’t believe. Remind kids that we all have the mission to share Jesus with others.

SAY 🗨️ We have learned a lot about the life of Paul. What is something you’ve learned about Paul that helps you trust God more? 🗨️

Answers will vary. Point out all the ways God was with Paul as he faced trials and joys. Discuss how God had a purpose for Paul’s life and used him to share the gospel with thousands of people. Remind kids that just as Paul trusted in God, they can trust Him too. Encourage kids to follow Paul’s example and be faithful to share Jesus with others.

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





LIVE

THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

☐ OPTION 1: SNAKE CATCHES ITS TAIL



Remind kids that Jeri Whitfield is a missionary in Thailand. Tell kids that a traditional game children in Thailand play is called Ngu Kin Hang (Engoo-kin-han) translated “Snake Catches Its Tail.”

Choose one kid to be the “snake head.” Lead the other kids to form the body of the snake by holding onto one another’s waists or shoulders. The last kid in line is the “tail” of the snake. Tell kids that the “snake head” will stand in front of the line and try to catch the “tail.” Tell kids they can move about, trying to get away from the “snake head.” Any kids who lose hold of the person in front of them are out. Play until the “snake head” catches the “tail” or as time allows.

SAY “In this game, the head of the snake had to be determined to not give up until the tail was caught. Missionaries, like Jeri, also have to be determined to not give up sharing the gospel. While not everyone will believe in Jesus, missionaries continue to share about Jesus, trusting some will hear and believe.”

☐ OPTION 2: WHERE AND HOW?



Form kids into pairs and invite each pair to take turns rolling the “Places Cube.” Lead pairs to determine ways they could share the good news about Jesus with the people in that location. For example, kids can discuss how they might play with a kid at a park and tell her Jesus loves her. Or, kids might bake their neighbor a treat and give them a card with a Bible verse. Encourage kids to be creative with how they would share the gospel. After a few minutes, invite kids to share their ideas with the group.

SAY “God wants us to share about Jesus with others wherever we go. Sometimes it can be as simple as telling others that Jesus loves them and died for them. We can follow the example of Paul and be brave, knowing God is with us as we share the good news.”

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.