

Journeys for Jesus

Paul's journey and trials
Acts 13-14; 16; 20-21; 25; 27-28

Character Trait: Commitment

(Estimated Lesson Time: 90 minutes)

Objectives:

- Children will recognize that Paul knew what Jesus wanted him to do: Tell the Gentiles about Him.
- Children will explain specific ways that God shows His commitment to us.
- Children will discuss ways that they can demonstrate their commitment to God through how they treat others.

Supplies:

- *Journeys for Jesus* loaded onto a tablet or phone in the *Bible App for Kids*
- 2 Flags *(or other small objects)*
- A paper plate *(one for each child)*
- A craft stick *(one for each child)*
- Small, triangular piece of felt, fabric, or paper *(one for each child)*
- Glue, stapler, or tape
- Writing supplies *(optional)*

Welcome Activity:

(5 minutes)

Welcome the children.

SAY: Raise your hand if you have ever gone on a journey or a trip *(Tell the children to put their hands down.)*

In today's lesson, we will learn about Paul's journeys to teach others about Jesus, including one journey that did not end where or the way he expected!

Review:

(5 minutes)

Guide the children in a brief review of the previous lesson by asking the following:

- **What happened in Peter's vision?** *(A huge sheet came down from heaven that was filled with animals. Then, a voice told him to kill something and eat it.)*
- **What did God show through Peter's vision?** *(God showed that He accepts everyone, people from every nation. God sent Jesus to help everyone who will trust in Him.)*
- **How does it make you feel to know that God sent Jesus to help people from every nation, not just a select few?** *(Answers will vary.)*

Today's Bible Story:

(10-15 minutes)

Show *Journeys for Jesus* from the *Bible App for Kids* or share the story aloud:

- Paul believed that God wanted him to tell Gentiles about Jesus.
- So he made three trips through Syria, Turkey, and Greece.

- Many people believed in Jesus, and many churches were started.
- Years later, Paul returned to Jerusalem.
- Some people were upset by his teaching and attacked him.
- He was unfairly arrested.
- Since Paul was a Roman citizen, he asked for his trial to be in Rome.
- Paul was put on a boat headed for Rome.
- The trip was slow.
- "Let's wait in Crete until the stormy season is over," Paul suggested.
- The captain sailed ahead anyway.
- There was a huge storm; everyone thought they would die.
- An angel told Paul that they would all be saved, and he would get to Rome.
- Paul told the others.
- Someone spotted land.
- The sailors planned to abandon ship and let the others die.
- Paul warned: "You will survive only if everyone stays aboard."
- The boat crashed on an island called Malta.
- The soldiers were afraid of being punished if the prisoners escaped.
- So they decided to kill them.
- But their commander liked Paul, so he ordered his men to let them live.
- They staggered ashore.
- Just as Paul had said, everyone was alive!
- The ruler of Malta let them stay with him.
- His father was sick.
- When Paul prayed for him, God healed him.
- They boarded another ship and went to Rome, where Paul was chained in a house.
- While there, he wrote letters to teach the new churches around the world.
- His letters are now included in the Bible!

Discussion:
(15 minutes)

Encourage the children to think more about the story by asking the following:

- **What did Paul believe God wanted him to do?** *(Tell the Gentiles about Jesus.)*
- **Did everyone like Paul's teachings?** *(No. Some people were very upset.)*
- **What happened to Paul as a result?** *(Paul was attacked and unfairly arrested.)*
- **Why was Paul put on a boat headed to Rome?** *(Paul was a Roman citizen, and he asked that his trial be in Rome.)*
- **When the storm came, the captain thought everyone would die. But what did an angel tell Paul?** *(Everyone would survive, and he would get to Rome.)*
- **After the boat crashed on the island, what did Paul do for the ruler of Malta?** *(Paul prayed for his father, and God healed him.)*
- **Where did Paul write letters to teach the new churches all over the world?** *(Paul wrote these letters while chained inside a house. He was under arrest.)*

SAY: Knowing God does not mean that we will not suffer. God loves all of us and has a plan to use even our challenges and hurts to accomplish good things. Even while Paul was chained up and under arrest, he was busy completing God's purpose for his life: He was writing many of the letters that we read today inside the Bible!



God's Bigger Story:

(5 minutes)

SAY: God used Paul's time in prison to inspire Paul to write some of the books of the Bible. God can use the hard times we go through in our lives today to fulfill His plan for us.



Memory Verse:

(10 minutes)

For the next two years *(raise two fingers)*,
Paul lived in Rome *(bring fingertips together above your head)* **at his own expense.**
He welcomed *(smile and wave)* **all who visited him,**
boldly proclaiming *(cup hands around your mouth)*
the Kingdom of God *(point both hands up)*
and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ *(touch your middle finger to the other palm, then switch)*.
And no one *(shake head)* **tried to stop him** *(stretch arm forward with hand out)*.

Acts 28:30-31 (NLT)



Activity:

(10 minutes)

Divide the children into two teams, split the playing area into two areas, and determine a location for "prison." Give each team a small flag *(or other object)* to hide somewhere in their team's area. The object of the game is to run into the other team's area, capture their flag, and make it safely back. Players can tag opposing teammates in their territory, causing them to be "out" and go to the prison location. Players in prison can only be freed by a teammate who tags and escorts them back to their playing area without getting tagged themselves. The first team to capture the flag and bring it safely back to their area wins.

SAY: During the game, many of you risked being tagged and placed in prison in order to capture the flag. You knew that the end goal was more important. Paul knew this while he suffered, too. No matter what happened to him, Paul still worked towards what God wanted him to do: Tell Gentiles about Jesus.



Response Activity:

(10 minutes)

Provide each child with a paper plate, a craft stick, and a small, triangular shape of felt, fabric or paper. Demonstrate how to fold the paper plate in half and carefully cut a small slit in the middle of the plate along the fold. Attach the triangular shape of felt, fabric, or paper to the top of the craft stick to create a small flag. Then, push the other end of the craft stick into the slit of the paper plate to create a small ship. Show the children how to partially unfold the paper plate, so that it will gently rock back and forth on a hard surface.

For younger children...
Simplify this activity for younger children by having the paper plates folded and the slits precut before the lesson.

For older children...
Encourage older children to write the following verse somewhere on their paper plate boat as a personal reminder: **Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock.** Matthew 7:24 (NLT)



Character Trait: Commitment

(10 minutes)

SAY: Commitment is dedication or being loyal to someone or something. Paul showed commitment to Jesus by traveling and teaching others about Him, even being arrested because of His commitment to doing so.

Encourage the children to think more about commitment by asking the following:

- **What is the opposite of commitment?** *(Answers will vary but should include breaking promises, not being trustworthy, and not keeping our word.)*
- **Why is commitment important?** *(Answers will vary but should include that it shows that we have integrity and will follow through on what we say we will do.)*
- **What are some specific ways God shows His commitment to us?** *(Answers will vary but may include by providing for our daily needs, by answering prayer, by providing us with purpose, and by sending His Son, Jesus, to save us from our sins.)*
- **Why is a personal commitment to God important?** *(Answers will vary but may include because it demonstrates a strong faith and trust in God. It is easy to question God's commitment to us when we experience hardship and suffering. But a commitment to God shows that our faith in Him is not changed or influenced by our circumstances.)*



Connect with Others:

(5 minutes)

SAY: We show commitment through the choices we make and our actions. We can also show our commitment to God through how we treat others. Think of a way that you can honor God by following through on a commitment you have made to someone else. Turn to someone next to you and share. *(Provide a few moments for the children to do this. Then, call on a few volunteers to share aloud.)*



Closing:

(2 minutes)

SAY: Long before Paul was teaching people about Jesus, Jesus was teaching how to live God's way. Jesus shared a story about a wise man who built his house on rock and a foolish man who built his house on sand (Matthew 7:24-27). When the storm came, the wise man was safe, but the foolish man was not. His house collapsed because it was not built on a firm foundation.

What we put our faith and trust in becomes our foundation. If we build our lives trusting in Jesus and make choices based on God's ways, then we can be sure that we will be safe no matter what kind of suffering or pain comes our way.

Paul was attacked and arrested, and he went through a storm at sea. Yet all the while, he knew he was safe because he knew God was with him. God is with each of us today, too (Zephaniah 3:17, Psalm 46:1). If we choose to place our faith in God instead of our shifting and changing circumstances, then we can know that we are safe, too—no matter what.

Prayer:
(2 minutes)

SAY:

Dear God,
Thank You for showing Your commitment to all of us by sending Jesus. Help us to show our commitment to You by sharing You with others through all that we do.
Amen.

Notes