

LIFE OF PAUL

by Christine Walton

**Grades 1-2
Year 2
Quarter 3**

This quarter uses selected stories from the book of Acts that relate the conversion and ministry of the Apostle Paul. Each lesson will consist of a Bible story and discussion and a craft, activity, or worksheet to reinforce what is being taught. Some lessons also include a life application story to give further understanding of the focus of the study. Of course, God's Word must be central to each lesson, but feel free to adapt other parts to your individual situation. It goes without saying that prayer must be an integral part of Sunday School, both as the teachers and others pray for the individual students and class as a whole at home, and through prayer by the students in class itself. Even non-Christians (and almost certainly some in your class will not know Jesus Christ) are commanded to pray. At least a short time of prayer should be included in every lesson, even though this will not be indicated in the teacher's instructions. The following explains the elements included in each lesson:

Lesson Aim

Main ideas taught in the Bible story that should be emphasized by the teacher.

Memory Verse

Verse to be memorized by the student. It should be repeated several times during the lesson at different moments to help the child remember it (see Memory Games). This quarter the verses will be **I Timothy 1:12-16 and II Corinthians 11:24-28**.

Lesson Background

Background ideas are given to help the teacher in telling the story.

Knowledge Objectives - Facts the student should be familiar with by the end of class.

Behavioral Objectives - Character qualities, attitudes, and actions related to the Bible story that the child should be encouraged to practice. Only God can change the sinful child's heart, but we can present God's standards so that the unbeliever may see his need of Christ and the Christian may grow in grace.

Lesson Procedure

BIBLE STORY

In most cases, the first and second grader should be able to understand the story when read straight from the Bible if a modern translation such as the New International Version is used. Because of this, a Bible story, as such, is not usually given. It is recommended that, in most cases, the teacher first give an introduction. Then she should read expressively the passage from the Bible, making appropriate comments to aid understanding. Good readers, using the same version of the Bible as the teacher, may be encouraged to follow along in their Bibles. In most cases, however, the children's reading ability is such that this is a hindrance to understanding rather than a help, since it requires so much effort for them to figure out the words that they lose the continuity of the story. After the Scripture is read the teacher should paraphrase the story in her own words and ask factual and discussion-type questions to facilitate the students' understanding.

STORY

A modern-day story reinforcing concepts taught in the Bible story.

SONGS

Songs are suggested that may be sung sometime during the lesson or in an opening session if desired. It is not necessary to sing all the songs listed. Many hymns may be difficult for beginning readers, so it may be good to concentrate on two or three hymns and a few choruses per quarter. Hymns listed for several lessons would be good choices.

WORKSHEET

Some lessons include worksheets to reinforce concepts taught.

CRAFT AND/OR ACTIVITY

To reinforce lessons taught. Materials needed are underlined. The availability of pencils and crayons is assumed and the word "cut" will be underlined if scissors are needed.

Home Helps

A paper to be sent home with lesson summary and suggested activities to reinforce the lesson at home.

NOTE: Any writing done by the teacher for activities or memory work should be neatly printed for easier reading by your beginning readers. Do not use all capitals or cursive writing.

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Additional Resources

The following may be a helpful supplement to the lessons in Year II, Quarter 3.

Lesson 12 - *Eermans' Handbook to the Bible*, Lion, 1973.

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Songs

<u>LESSON</u>	<u>SONG</u>	<u>TRINITY HYMNAL</u>
1,3,10,13	Obey My Voice (Jeremiah 7:23)	
1,6	Jesus Sinners Doth Receive	473
1,3,5	Come Ye Sinners	472
1,5	Not What My Hands Have Done	461
1,3	Come Every Soul (Only Trust Him)	675
1,5,6	Marvelous Grace of Our Loving Lord	465
1	We Sing the Glorious Conquest	483
2,6,10,13	A New Commandment (John 13:34)	
2,6,13	This Is My Commandment (John 15:12)	
2,6,13	Beloved, Let Us Love One Another (I John 4:7-8)	
2	How Beautiful the Sight	356
2	Jesus, What a Friend for Sinners	498
3,10,11	Let God Arise (Psalm 68:1)	
3,10,11	Not By Might (Zechariah 4:6)	
3,10,11	The Weapons of Our Warfare (II Corinthians 10:14)	
3,10,11,13	A Mighty Fortress	92
4	I Thessalonians 5:16-18	
4,13	Great Is Thy Faithfulness	32
4,13	Let Us With a Gladsome Mind	33
5	Jesus Loves the Little Children	
7	Rejoice in the Lord Always (Philippians 4:4)	
7	In Everything Give Thanks (I Thessalonians 5:16-17)	
7	Rejoice the Lord is King	310
7	Rejoice Ye Pure in Heart	604
8	Except the Lord Build (Psalm 127:1)	
8	God, That Madest Earth and Heaven	405
9	Only Elohim	
9	Just One God is He	
9,13	Jesus, Name Above All Names	
10	Only a Boy Named David	
10	Can a Little Child Like Me	636
10,11	Jesus Bids Us Shine	592
10	Trust and Obey	672
11	King of Kings and Lord of Lords	
11	Stand Up for Jesus	571
12	My Anchor Holds	617
12	A Shelter in the Time of Storm	619

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Bible Baseball

Singles (Easy)

What was Paul's name before he became a missionary to the Gentiles?

Why was Saul traveling to a foreign city before he became a Christian?

What happened to Saul as he was traveling to a foreign city and who appeared to him?

Name one person Paul met on Cyprus.

Who did the people of Lystra think Paul and Barnabas were? (in general; gods)

When the people at Lystra discovered Paul and Barnabas were not gods, what did they do?

Name one city Paul visited on his first missionary journey.

Who deserted Paul on his first missionary journey?

What did the magistrates have done to Paul and Silas before they put them in prison?

What did Paul and Silas do in prison?

What unusual thing happened to Paul while he was in prison?

What did the jailer plan to do when he thought his prisoners had escaped?

What job did Priscilla, Aquila, and Paul have?

What did a group of Jews plan to do to Paul?

If the Jews did not succeed in their plan, what had they vowed to do?

Who told the commander about the Jews' plan to kill Paul?

Who was Caesar? (the emperor, the king of the Roman world)

Where was Paul to be tried by Caesar?

When the ship Paul was traveling on ran aground, how did the men escape?

What animal did Paul meet on an island?

What did the island people think when the snake bit Paul and how did they change their minds?

What was wrong with Publius' father and how did Paul help him?

Doubles (Average)

To what city was Paul traveling when he saw a bright light in the sky? (Damascus)

Who prayed that Paul would be able to see? (Ananias)

Who accompanied Paul on his first missionary journey? (Barnabas)

What island did Paul visit on his first missionary journey? (Cyprus)

Name two people Paul met on Cyprus.

Who was the proconsul of Cyprus who believed in the Lord when Paul preached to him?

Name three cities Paul visited on his first missionary journey.

Explain the disagreement that led to the Jerusalem Council.

Name a woman from Thyatira who prayed by a river.

In what city was Paul in jail when an earthquake occurred?

Who was put in jail with Paul at Philippi?

What question did the jailer ask Paul and Silas?

What did the jailer and his family do after they believed in Jesus?

When Festus wished to send Paul to Jerusalem, to whom did Paul appeal?

Name the centurion in charge of bringing Paul to Rome.

Why did Paul warn some sailors not to sail from Crete to Rome?

Why was it so dangerous for sailors not to see the sun or stars for days in ancient times?

What drastic measures did the sailors on Paul's ship take when they were in a big storm?

How did Paul comfort the people who had been in a big storm?

What did the soldiers want to do to the prisoners on the ship?

On what island did Paul's ship run aground?

Who was the chief official of Malta?

Triples (Difficult)

Name Paul's home city. (Tarsus)

Give both names of the sorcerer Paul met on Cyprus. (Elymas; Bar-Jesus)

What miracle did Paul do at Lystra? (healed a lame man)

Specifically, who did the people at Lystra think Paul and Barnabas were? (Hermes and Zeus)

Name four cities Paul visited on his first missionary journey.

Name one person, other than Paul and Barnabas, who spoke at the Jerusalem Council.

Name one person who accompanied Paul on his second missionary journey. (Silas or Timothy)

What was Lydia's occupation? (dealer in purple cloth)

Why was Paul put in prison at Philippi?

What question did the jailer ask Paul and Silas and what answer did they give?

Name two things the jailer did for Paul and Silas.

What did Paul want the magistrates to do after the night of the earthquake at Philippi?

To whom did Priscilla and Aquila explain the way of God more adequately? (Apollos)

Name the goddess worshiped in Ephesus. (Artemis)

Whom did the Jews push to the front of the crowd to speak in the theater at Ephesus? (Alexander)

Where was Paul arrested after his third missionary journey? (Jerusalem)

Name the commander who arrested Paul in Jerusalem. (Claudius Lysias)

Name the two groups of Jews who fought over whether or not Paul was guilty. (Pharisees and Sadducees)

Name Felix' wife. (Drusilla)

Felix kept speaking with Paul because he hoped Paul would do something - what?

Why did Felix leave Paul in prison?

Who succeeded Felix? (full name)

What house guest did Festus consult about Paul's case and why? (Herod Agrippa II)

Name Agrippa's sister who was with him. (Bernice)

Name one person who traveled with Paul to Rome. (Julius, Luke and Aristarchus).

At what city did Paul and the sailors argue about whether they should continue the journey to Rome? (Fair Havens)

What holiday had already passed, making traveling dangerous? (The Fast; Yom Kippur, The Day of Atonement)

Describe in detail some of the measures taken by the sailors on Paul's ship when they were in a big storm.

Home Runs (Super Tough)

Name one of the prophets and teachers at the church in Antioch. (Acts 6:5)

After leaving Antioch, from where did Paul begin his first missionary journey? (Seleucia)

Name two cities on Cyprus. (Salamis, Paphos)

What language did the people at Lystra speak? (Lycaonian)

Name five cities Paul visited on his first missionary journey.

Name two people other than Paul and Barnabas who spoke at the Jerusalem Council. (Peter and James)

Who accompanied Paul on his second missionary journey? (Silas and Timothy)

Where did Paul meet Priscilla and Aquila? (Corinth)

What Macedonian traveling companion of Paul did the people of Ephesus seize and bring into the theater? (Gaius and Aristarchus)

How long did the people of Ephesus shout in the theater and what did they shout? (two hours)

Name the lawyer who brought accusations against Paul. (Tertullus)

Name the high priest who came to Caesarea with Tertullus. (Ananias)

Name two of the three accusations Tertullus levelled against Paul.

How long was Paul in prison under Felix? (two years)

What house guest did Festus consult about Paul's case? (Herod Agrippa II)

When Paul appealed to Caesar, who was Caesar? (Nero)

Name two people who traveled with Paul to Rome. (Julius, Luke, and Aristarchus)

From where did the ship come on which Paul began his journey to Rome. (Adramyttium)

Where did Paul first change ships on his journey to Rome? (Myra)

From where did this second ship come on which Paul continued his journey to Rome? (Alexandria)

In the lee of what small island did the crew secure the lifeboat on Paul's ship? (Cauda)

How many people were on the ship in the storm or for how many days had they gone without food? (14 days; 276 people)

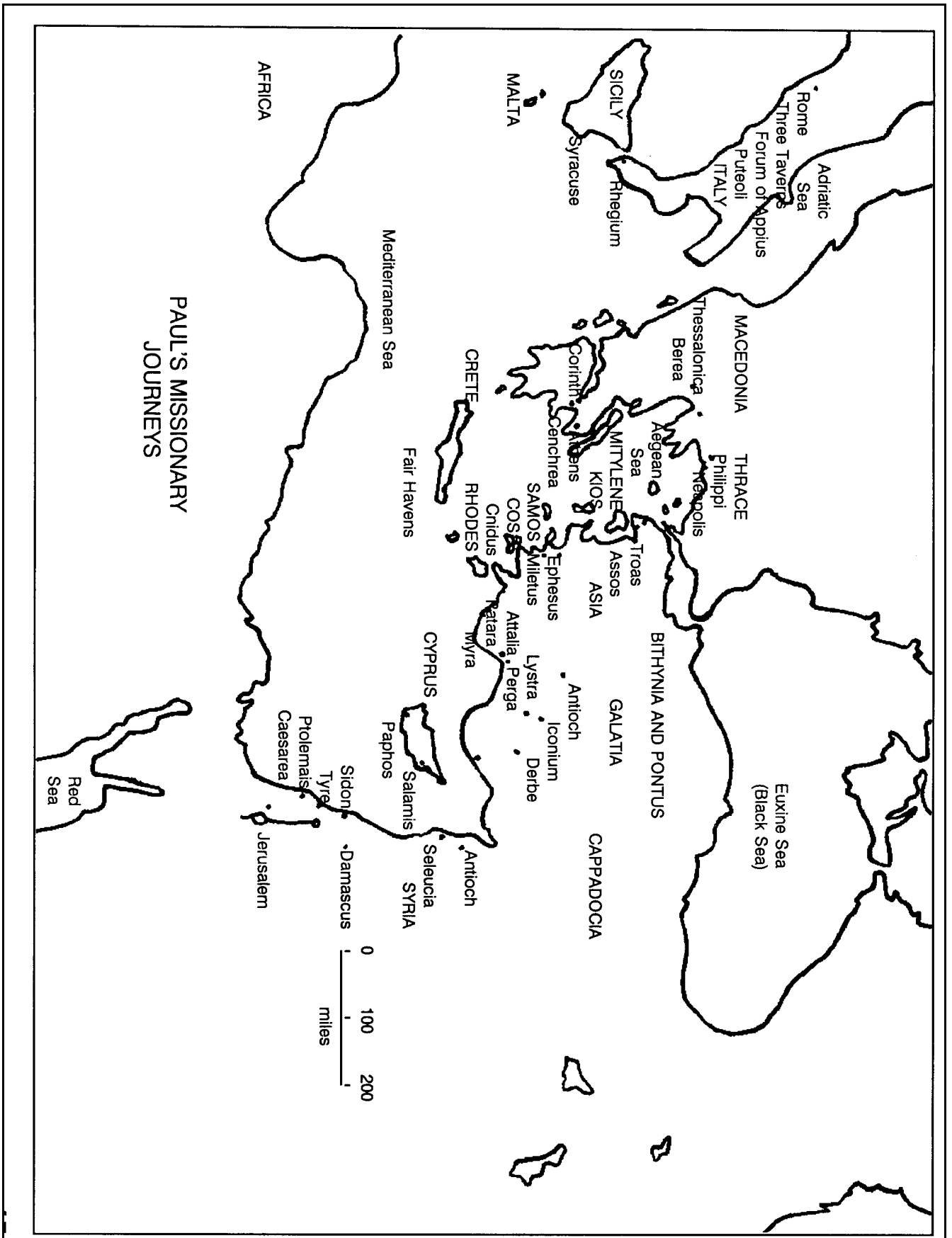
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Missions Home Helps

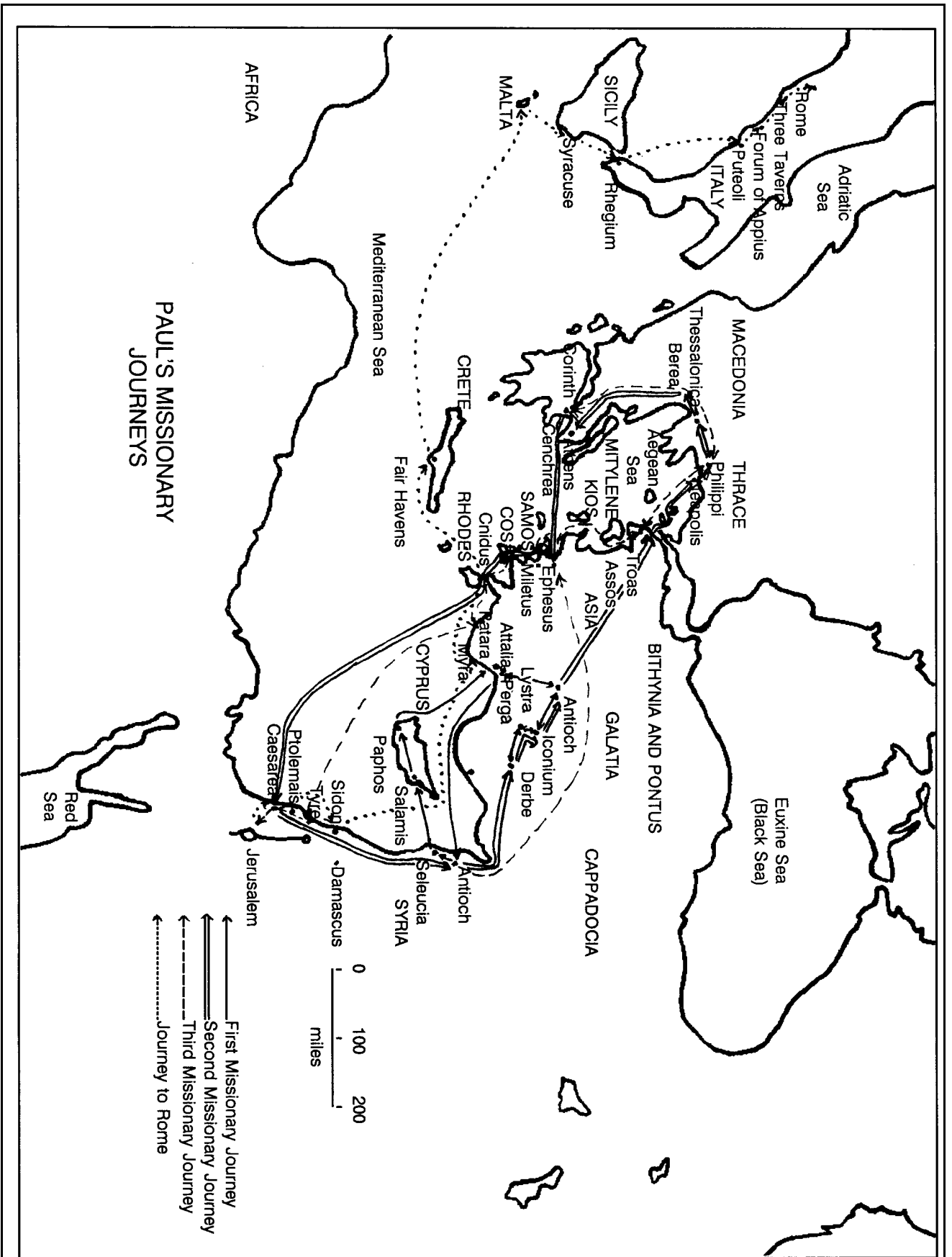
Year II, Quarter 3 focuses on Paul and his missionary journeys. This special Home Helps sheet is presented in order to encourage an interest in cross-cultural evangelism and other missionary work.

1. **Map Study** - If your child is unfamiliar with how to use a map, you may wish to begin by helping him draw a map of his room or neighborhood. Explain to him that a map shows things smaller than, but proportional to, their actual size. Demonstrate the function of a map's scale and key. If such an idea seems practical, allow your child to play with sand or dirt and water, constructing rivers, mountains, islands, lakes, and the like, and then drawing a rough map of it. Study state maps, finding towns, roads, and various topographical features. Study a world map or globe. Identify where you live and the location of various missionaries your church supports. Using a world map or map of the Mediterranean, trace Paul's missionary journeys as they are studied week by week.
2. Choose a missionary and learn all you can about him and his family and the area in which he ministers. Find out background information on the missionary's country and people group, such as their language, religion, customs, dress, food, education, economic condition, political situation, family structure, games, and holidays. Cut out magazine pictures of the country and its people. Find out about the missionary himself and his family. Obtain a picture of the family, if possible. What type of ministry does he have? Compile what you find out in a scrapbook. Your church missions committee, recent encyclopedias, magazines such as *National Geographic* and even the country's tourist information bureau can help you in this.
3. Write "your missionary," you and your child each writing part of the letter (or perhaps your child could write the missionary's child). Include why you are writing, some of the information you have found out about them, and ask how you can best minister to their needs. Ask what you can *pray* for and then *do so* consistently. You might wish to send a recording instead of a letter or arrange a conversation through Skype. If the missionary is familiar with your congregation, include news that would be of interest to him.
4. Let your child do extra chores, sell cookies or lemonade, have a garage sale or do a similar project to raise money for "his missionary" and/or encourage him to give some of his allowance to missions.
5. Learn some of the language and perhaps a song or two of the people to whom "your missionary" ministers.
6. Have an "Eskimo party" or a "Mexican party" or a "whatever people group or country 'your missionary' ministers to" party. Prepare food, sing songs, play games, and tell stories from that country. Dress in native costume. Have everyone use the appropriate foreign language to say "yes" and "no." Decorate the room with pictures or articles of interest from the country.

7. Write down “your missionary’s” name, his picture if possible, his country, and important facts about his work on an index card. Do the same for other missionaries you know or those supported by your church. Pray for a different missionary and his family each day, noting requests and answers to prayer on the index cards.
8. Read books together or see a film about missions in general or a specific missionary.
9. Sing hymns about missions such as: “Declare His Glory” (*Trinity Hymnal*, #454); “Jesus Shall Reign” (*Trinity Hymnal*, #441); “Shout For the Blessed Jesus Reigns” (*Trinity Hymnal*, #369); “The Ends of All the Earth” (*Trinity Hymnal*, #368).
10. Read missionary biographies and books about missions in general, such as:
Peace Child (Don Richardson, Regal, 1974).
Lords of the Earth (Don Richardson, Regal, 1977).
Through Gates of Splendor (Elisabeth Elliot, Harper and Row, 1956).
Books by and about Wycliffe Bible Translators or the free magazine, *In Other Words* (Wycliffe Bible Translators, Huntington Beach, CA 92647).



PAUL'S MISSIONARY JOURNEYS



PAUL'S MISSIONARY JOURNEYS

PAUL'S CONVERSION

Acts 9:1-19

Lesson Aim

That students should, like Paul, realize the necessity of repenting from sin and turning to Christ.

Memory Verse

This quarter, I Timothy 1:12-16 and II Corinthians 11:24-28. Explain to your students that this quarter's memory verses are Paul's personal testimony to what Christ did in his life. **This week, I Timothy 1:12** - "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that He considered me faithful, appointing me to His service."

Lesson Background

This quarter we will study the life of a man God used as no other in the life of the church - the apostle Paul. We can learn much from his life (I Corinthians 11:1), but must remember that whatever good he accomplished (indeed, whatever good any of us accomplishes), was done by God's grace, for as Paul admits, he was the worst of sinners (I Timothy 1:15).

Paul (or Saul as he was then known) was born in Tarsus in Cilicia (an important center of learning in Asia Minor that was a crossroads of Greek, Roman, and oriental culture), but was brought up in Jerusalem (Acts 22:3). Considering Paul's political status and educational background, it seems likely that his family had wealth and a high social position. Paul was a Roman citizen, a favorable status that conferred upon him such privileges as the guarantee of a trial. He was a Pharisee, educated under Gamaliel (Acts 22:3), and probably spoke Greek, Latin, Hebrew, and Aramaic. Saul had practically every worldly advantage possible in his life, as well as a strict religious upbringing, yet he was far from God and full of hatred, even approving

the murder of God's servants (e.g., Stephen - Acts 7:54-8:1). Saul rightly realized that Christian teaching was blasphemy (unless, of course, it was true), and so he zealously persecuted believers, pursuing some even as far as Damascus, one hundred and fifty miles away, where they had fled from Jerusalem.

The Damascene Christians need not have worried about this evil man's murderous threats, for the Lord Himself intervened, meeting Saul on the road to Damascus and changing him to an outstanding servant of God and defender of the true faith. "As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?'" Note here the Lord's identification with His body - to persecute Christians is to persecute Jesus Himself. When Christ told Saul who He was, he immediately obeyed the Lord and continued to Damascus where "for three days he was blind and did not eat or drink anything" (Acts 9:9).

Meanwhile, the Lord met with a disciple named Ananias, telling him to go to the house of Judas on Straight Street, where a man from Tarsus named Saul would be waiting for him. Ananias had some obvious reservations about such an undertaking, but readily obeyed the Lord's command after mildly questioning His wisdom in the matter. What would our response be in a similar situation? Ananias went to Saul, who was then healed of his blindness, filled with the Holy Spirit, and baptized. We would do well to emulate Saul's obedient and prayerful attitude as well as Ananias' humble obedience to the Lord in spite of danger.

Everyone's conversion experience is not as dramatic as Paul's, but every Christian knows the same marvelous grace of God that Paul experienced, even if he does not know the exact moment of his salvation. Like Paul, all people are commanded to repent, to turn from their sin to Christ. Pray that your students will come to know this same Jesus that Paul met on the road to Damascus.

Knowledge Objectives - To know that Jesus appeared in a blinding light to Saul (later known as Paul) as he was travelling to Damascus to persecute Christians there; that Jesus asked Saul why he was persecuting Him, and when Saul found out that it was Jesus who was speaking to him, he went to Damascus as he was commanded, being led into the city by his companions because he was then blind; that in Damascus he fasted for three days until Ananias came in obedience to the Lord (after some initial objections) to where Saul was staying at Judas' house on Straight Street; that Ananias put his hands on Saul and that something like scales fell from Saul's eyes so that he could see again, he was filled with the Holy Spirit and was baptized.

Behavioral Objectives - By God's grace, to repent and believe in Christ as Paul did, and humbly to obey the Lord no matter what He commands, as did Ananias.

Lesson Procedure

Paul Puppet - You may wish to make a puppet to represent Paul to help in introducing or telling some of this quarter's Bible stories. Puppets can add interest to a lesson as long as your students understand that the spiritual concepts you are dealing with are vital and true, and, in this case, there really was a man Paul, even though the puppet is only pretend. You may use the pattern included here or find an appropriate pattern in a craft book to construct your Paul puppet.

Introduction - Explain the context of this quarter's stories approximately as follows: "Last quarter we studied Jesus' parables, but Jesus did many things besides telling stories. What is the most important thing Jesus did? Yes, He died for sinners and came alive again. When the disciples found out that the Lord was alive, they wanted to tell everyone the good news, but not everyone believed in the Resurrection and

some people tried to hurt the disciples. In spite of this persecution, God blessed the early church and more and more people became Christians.”

“One person who hated Christians was named Saul. This was not the Saul who was the first king of Israel.” (Later in the lesson you can explain that Saul later was called Paul when he began to preach to the Gentiles). “One day a Christian named Stephen was telling some men about Jesus. The men became so angry that they threw stones at Stephen and killed him. Saul watched and was pleased that they were doing this.” (Read **Acts 7:54-8:1** at this time, if desired.) “Saul traveled to distant cities, searching for Christians to arrest them and put them in prison in Jerusalem. On one of these trips, however, something happened that changed Saul’s whole life.”

BIBLE STORY

Read **Acts 9:1-19** and discuss, focusing on Paul’s conversion experience, but also emphasizing Ananias’ humble obedience to the Lord in spite of danger. Ask your children how a person becomes a Christian. What does it mean to repent? Is everyone’s salvation experience as dramatic as Paul’s? Perhaps you could share with your students the circumstances surrounding your own salvation or, if you are quite certain that a child in your class knows the Lord, perhaps he could share how this came about. Point out that while everyone’s conversion experience is different, all people are commanded to repent. Christians are those whose lives have been completely changed by God’s gracious working in their lives. Their sins have been forgiven, they are new creatures, born again, having passed from death to life, from the kingdom of Satan to the kingdom of God.

STORY

Tell your own conversion story or that of a famous Christian such as John Newton, a slave trader who came to God during a violent storm at sea, or Augustine of Hippo, who led a profligate life until, with the help of his mother Monica’s unceasing prayer, he came to Christ in a garden by reading Romans 13:13-14 after purportedly hearing a voice say “take and read.” Discuss this as explained above.

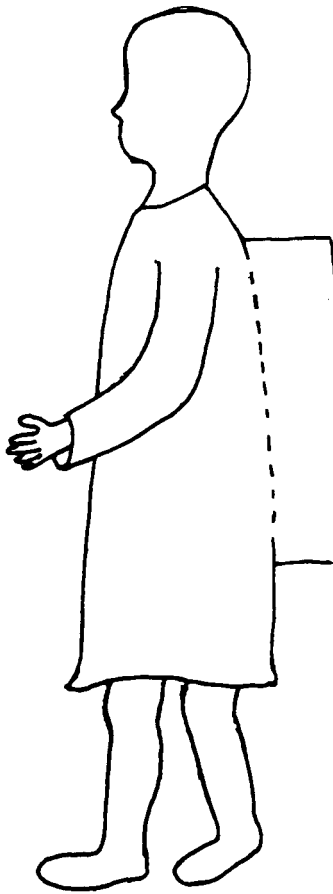
SONGS

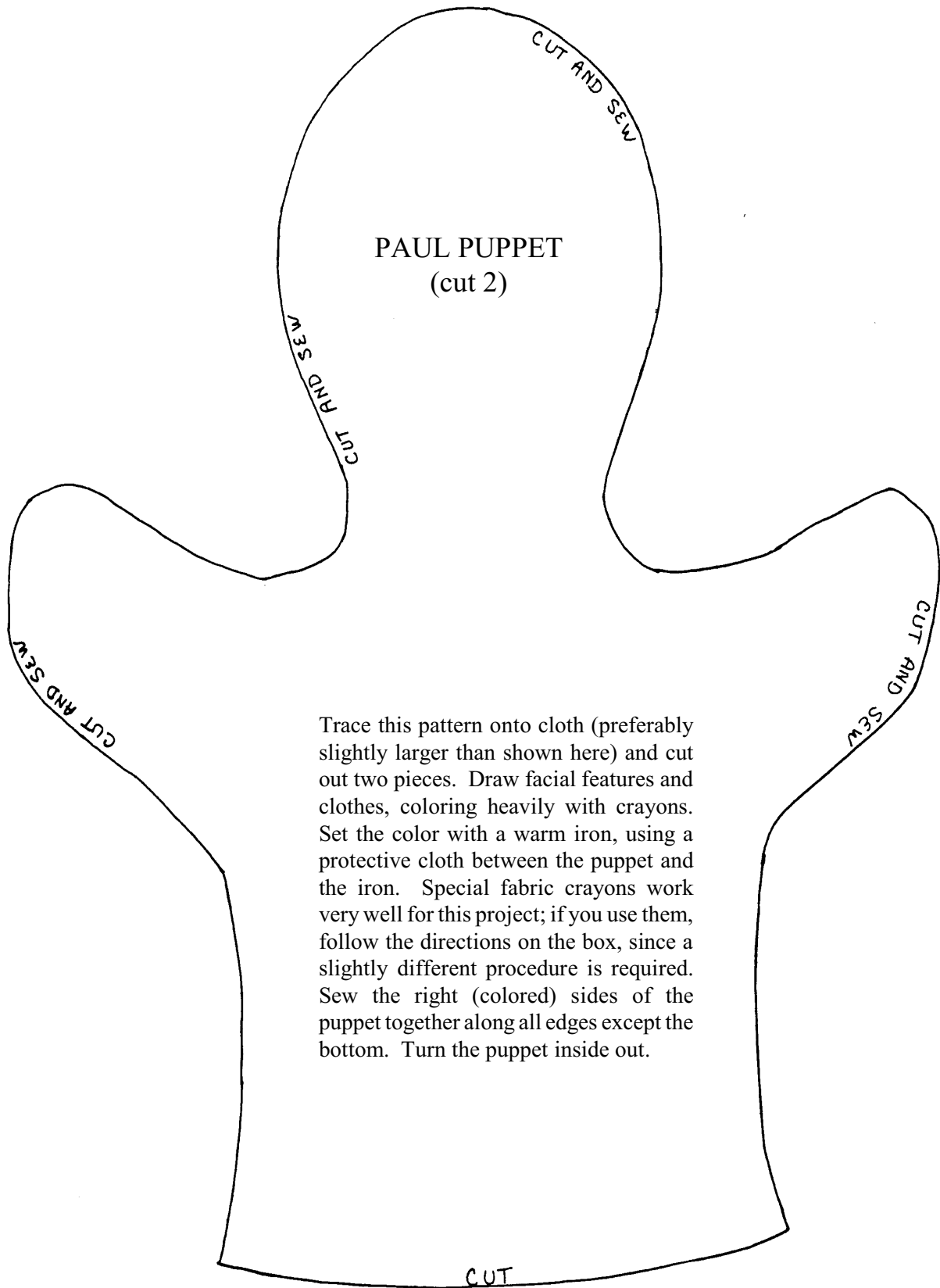
“Obey My Voice” (Jeremiah 7:23); “Jesus Sinners Doth Receive” (*Trinity Hymnal*, 473); “Come Ye Sinners” (*Trinity Hymnal*, #472); “Not What My Hands Have Done” (*Trinity Hymnal*, #461); “Come Every Soul” (“Only Trust Him”; *Trinity Hymnal*, #675); “Marvelous Grace Of Our Loving Lord” (*Trinity Hymnal*, #465); “We Sing the Glorious Conquest” (*Trinity Hymnal*, #483).

Take Home Activity

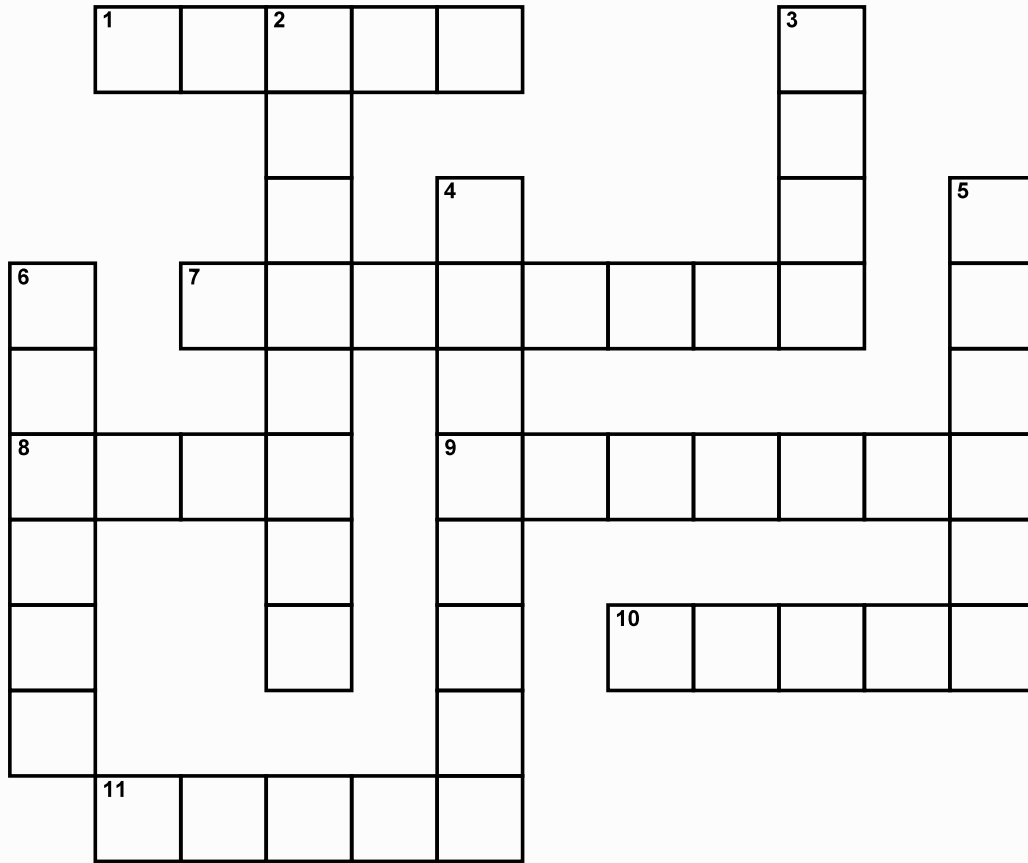
1. **Repent Person** - Transfer the pattern of the “repent person” to heavy paper. Have your children color and cut out the person, drawing in all facial features except the mouth, and tape the tab on the figure’s back to the middle of a piece of paper. On top of the paper, have your children print “Repentance - turning from.” On the left side of the paper, they should then print the word “Sin” on the right side of the paper, the word “God” on the left, and between the words “Sin” and “God,” the word “to” above the repent person. Have your students face the figure toward the “Sin” side of the paper and draw a frown on his face. Have them turn the figure toward “God” and draw a smile on his face.

2. **Worksheet** - Have your students do this individually or together as a class.





Trace this pattern onto cloth (preferably slightly larger than shown here) and cut out two pieces. Draw facial features and clothes, coloring heavily with crayons. Set the color with a warm iron, using a protective cloth between the puppet and the iron. Special fabric crayons work very well for this project; if you use them, follow the directions on the box, since a slightly different procedure is required. Sew the right (colored) sides of the puppet together along all edges except the bottom. Turn the puppet inside out.



WORD BANK

Gentiles Straight Paul Jesus light
 repent Tarsus Ananias Judas fast Damascus

ACROSS:

1. On the road to Damascus, Saul saw a bright _____.
7. Saul stayed in a house on this street.
8. Saul's name later became _____.
9. The man who obeyed God and came to help Saul.
10. Who Saul met on the road?
11. Saul stayed at this man's house.

DOWN:

2. The Lord said that Saul would tell this group of people about Him.
3. To go without food as Saul did for three days in Damascus.
4. The city to which Saul was traveling to persecute Christians.
5. Saul's home town.
6. To turn from sin to God.

BIBLE PASSAGE - LESSON FOCUS

Acts 9:1-19 - All people need to repent of their sin and turn to Christ.

MEMORY VERSE

This quarter, I Timothy 1:12-16 and II Corinthians 11:24-28; this week, I Timothy 1:12 - "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that He considered me faithful, appointing me to His service."

SUGGESTED PROJECTS

1. Discuss today's Bible story about Paul and talk about how a person can become a Christian. Be sure your child realizes that all conversion experiences are not as dramatic as Paul's. Ask your child whether he thinks he is a Christian and encourage him to repent of his sins and turn to the Lord. Never force, pressure, or manipulate him into professing Christ. If you yourself have not been redeemed by Christ, speak to your child's Sunday School teacher or a pastor of this church about the necessity of turning to God and becoming a Christian.
2. Read books with your child about how God has saved different individuals and brought them from a sinful life to a relationship with Him.
3. Help your child sew a Paul puppet to use to retell this quarter's Sunday School Bible stories at home. Transfer the puppet pattern included here to cloth or obtain puppet-making instructions from a craft book.
4. Finish the worksheet if it was not completed in class.
5. Sing songs such as: "Obey My Voice" (Jeremiah 7:23); "Jesus Sinners Doth Receive" (*Trinity Hymnal*, 473); "Come Ye Sinners" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #472); "Not What My Hands Have Done" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #461); "Come Every Soul" ("Only Trust Him"; *Trinity Hymnal*, #675); "Marvelous Grace Of Our Loving Lord" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #465); "We Sing the Glorious Conquest" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #483).

SUGGESTED PARENTAL READING

Scripture: Acts 22:3-21; Acts 26:2-18; Philippians 3:1-11; I Timothy 1:12-17.

Christian biographies and books about salvation such as:

Mere Christianity (C.S. Lewis, Macmillan, 1952.)
Basic Christianity (John R. W. Stott, IVP, London 1958, Eerdmans, 1979.)
Knowing God (J. I. Packer, Intervarsity Press, 1973.)

PAUL'S ESCAPE

Acts 9:20-31

Lesson Aim

To teach students that we should help our friends, as did Barnabas and the Christians in Damascus.

Memory Verse

This quarter, I Timothy 1:12-16 and II Corinthians 11:24-28; this week, I Timothy 1:13 - “Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief.”

Lesson Background

Paul was a changed man. He had gone from being a persecutor of the church to being an ardent follower of the Lord, a new creature in Christ. No half-hearted disciple, Paul immediately began to preach that Jesus is the Son of God. This declaration would have seemed blasphemous to the Jews who would not even mention the name of God, and amazing coming from such a stalwart Pharisee as Saul. Note that proclaiming the Gospel is the natural response to belief in Christ. Paul witnessed in such a powerful manner that the Jews conspired to kill him. This was not surprising, for as Paul later wrote to Timothy, “everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted” (II Timothy 3:12). Do we know anything of suffering for Christ’s sake (Philippians 1:29)?

The chronology of the events in today’s Scripture passage remains unclear because in other passages (Galatians 1:13-24; II Corinthians 11:32-33) Paul mentions events in his life that would seem to fit into this time period but that go unreported by Luke. The following order of places that Paul visited seems the most likely: Damascus (Acts 9:19-22), Arabia (ruled by King Aretas IV of the Nabatean Arabs from 9 B.C.-40 A.D.; II Corinthians 11:32-33), Damascus (Acts 9:23-25), Jerusalem, Caesarea (a seaport built by Herod the

Great and Roman governmental headquarters of Judea), and Tarsus, the capital of Cilicia. Wherever he went, God seems to have provided Paul with Christian friends who helped him in spite of danger. In Damascus, the once-proud Pharisee escaped the clutches of the Jews and King Aretas' governor by rather ignominiously escaping in a basket let down through an opening in the city wall (houses were often built along city walls). In Jerusalem, Barnabas befriended Paul when the other Christians would have nothing to do with him. The believers' reticence to accept Paul is hardly surprising. Could God actually change that murderer Saul into a follower of Jesus? Impossible! It was probably a trick so he could arrest the brethren and throw them in prison. Even when the Christians became convinced of the radical transformation that had occurred in Paul's life, how could they forgive him? Some of their relations and friends were in prison, and some had probably died because of what this man had done. The author of one commentary on Acts compares these early Christians' situation with that of a New Guinean believer who became visibly upset at a communion service. When asked what was disturbing him, the man replied that the person who had just come into the assembly had killed and eaten his father! Amazingly, the man quickly calmed down and went on to partake of the Lord's Supper with his former enemy, but now brother in Christ.

Do we know anything of this kind of forgiveness? Do we believe that God can radically change a person's life and that, in a certain sense, we were once as evil as Paul? Do we, like Barnabas, boldly stand up for other Christians in spite of ridicule, opposition, or even danger? Would we risk our lives to help our friends, as did the Christians in Damascus, and are we willing, like Paul, to proclaim Jesus Christ courageously in spite of opposition? Such questions should give you and your students much to consider this week.

Knowledge Objectives - To know that after the Lord saved him, Paul immediately began to preach that Jesus is the Son of God; that the Jews in Damascus tried to kill Paul, but friends helped him escape in a basket through an opening in the city wall; and that Barnabas befriended Paul in Jerusalem when other Christians were afraid of him.

Behavioral Objectives - By God's grace to stand up for Christian friends and be willing to help them in spite of difficulties; to proclaim boldly that Jesus is the Son of God in spite of persecution.

Lesson Procedure

Introduction - Ask your children questions to review last week's lesson. Emphasize the radical transformation God had made in Paul's life. Explain that today we will study about the results of that change, as Paul, instead of persecuting Christians, began to proclaim that Jesus is the Son of God.

BIBLE STORY

Read **Acts 9:19-31** (NIV) and discuss, focusing on the courageous way the Damascene Christians and Barnabas befriended Paul, as well as pointing out the persecution that Paul suffered because of his faith in Christ. As you read, you should further explain and discuss different elements in the story, using background material as needed.

MAP STUDY

Maps will be used this quarter to help your students better understand Paul's missionary journeys, which they will record week by week as they study them (the teacher's map has the missionary journeys already marked). The student's and teacher's maps are simplified, omitting many islands, rivers, etc. It would be good to use a commercial wall map also for this quarter's studies. This week your students should write nothing on their maps except their names (so the maps can be collected and handed out each week), and do the coloring explained below.

Begin by explaining what a map is. You may wish your students to draw a quick map of their room or neighborhood. Pass out the maps and have them find which parts represent land and which parts represent water. They should then lightly color the water blue and the land brown with colored pencils. Crayons, felt-tipped markers, or dark coloring will make it difficult to see the features on the map and later to mark out Paul's missionary journeys. Stress the importance of neat work, for this map will be used throughout the quarter. Point out islands. Ask your children if things are as big on a map as they really are. Is a larger map needed to draw a larger area? Use this to explain the scale of miles. Be sure also to explain how long a mile is by comparing it to a distance with which they are familiar, preferably one that they walk.

STORY

The story "Sam" can be used as a play or told as a story. If used as a play, please make sure you get the extra copies back from the students to keep in the Teacher's Manual.

SONGS

"A New Commandment" (John 13:34); "This Is My Commandment" (John 15:12); "Beloved, Let Is Love One Another" (I John 4:7-8); "How Beautiful The Sight" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #356); "Jesus What A Friend For Sinners" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #498).

Take Home Activity

Paul At Damascus - Have your students draw a window with some men looking out on the top of a preferably tan, gray or brown piece of construction paper. They should then draw rock or brick shapes on the paper, which represents the city wall of Damascus. Have them poke a small hole in the window and stick a paper reinforcement on the back of the construction paper over this hole. Have your children draw, color and cut out a paper figure to represent Paul. Have them also draw, color and cut out a basket shape and cut a horizontal slit in the top of it. Your children should then tape a small piece of string or yarn from one side of the basket to the other (on the back of the basket) as a handle and tie a longer piece of string or yarn to the middle of this string with which to raise and lower the basket. Your children may then thread one end of the long string through the hole they poked in the window of the city wall, tape it to the back of the city wall construction paper, put Paul through the slit in the basket, and have his friends lower him to safety.

SAM

Characters: **Tim**, a Christian
Oscar, a non-Christian bully
Sam, a Christian boy with mental and physical problems

Tim: "I'm sure glad we're friends again, Oscar."
Oscar: "Yeah, me too. Wanna come over my house and play checkers?"
Tim: "Sure. Oh, here comes Sam. Maybe he would like to come with us."
Oscar: "Are you kidding? Stupid Sammy? He can't play checkers. He can't do anything. He even walks funny. Look at him."
Sam: "Hi, guys. Whatcha doing?"
Tim: "Hi, Sam."
Oscar: "Here comes Sam, his head is full of jam, he looks so silly and he walks like a lamb."
[Sam turns and walks away.]
Tim: "Oscar! Come back, Sam. Oscar didn't mean it."
Sam: "Uh-uh. I'm going home."
Tim: "Oscar, now look what you've done. Why did you have to say something like that?"
Oscar: "Well, it's true. Who wants him around, anyway? Let's go play."
Tim: "No, Oscar. Not without Sam. He may be a little different, but he's my friend. Maybe he can't play ball or games and things well, but he colors beautiful pictures and you should see the tricks he's taught his dog. But what's important is that God made him just like He made you. He loves God and God loves him and I do, too. Maybe you'd like him if you got to know him."
Oscar: "Yeah, I didn't know that. But it makes me feel funny just being with him."
Tim: "That's because you haven't gotten to know him. And that was very mean to call him names, Oscar. You really should tell him you're sorry."
Oscar: "Well, O.K. Then will you play checkers?"
Tim: "Can Sam come and watch, and then can we do something he'd like?"
Oscar: "Yeah, I guess so."
Tim: "O.K., then, let's go. And thanks, Oscar. You'll see what I mean. Sam can be your friend, too."

BIBLE PASSAGE - LESSON FOCUS

Acts 9:19-31 - We should help our friends, as Barnabas and the Christians in Damascus helped Paul.

MEMORY VERSE

This quarter, I Timothy 1:12-16 and II Corinthians 11:24-28; this week, I Timothy 1:13 - "Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in unbelief."

SUGGESTED PROJECTS

1. Barnabas befriended Paul even though it was an unpopular and even dangerous thing to do. Have your family members think of an unpopular person they can befriend, plan specific ways to do so, and carry out these plans. Ask God to help you in this.
2. Note how people treat their friends, and whether anyone stands up for what is right in spite of opposition, on television programs viewed and in books read this week. Did the characters act in a God-honoring way? What were the consequences of their actions? Were these consequences realistic in view of what we know about God and His world? Where does loyalty to a friend stop?
3. Paul's immediate response to becoming a Christian was to proclaim to others that Jesus is the Son of God. He continued to declare God's Word even when he was persecuted for doing so. Pray that God will give those in your family who know Jesus an opportunity to speak the Gospel to someone this week, and do so.
4. It was probably very difficult for the Christians in Damascus and Jerusalem to accept Paul into their fellowship. How could they forgive someone who had persecuted them and had their friends and relations imprisoned and perhaps even put to death? God in His grace enabled them to do so. Are there people you need to forgive? Ask God to work in their lives and bring reconciliation between you and them.
5. Sing songs such as: "A New Commandment" (John 13:34); "This Is My Commandment" (John 15:12); "Beloved, Let Us Love One Another" (I John 4:7-8); "How Beautiful The Sight" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #356); "Jesus What A Friend For Sinners" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #498).

SUGGESTED PARENTAL READING

Scripture - Galatians 1:13-24; II Corinthians 11:32-33.

PAUL AT PAPHOS

Acts 13:1-13

Lesson Aim

To help students understand that we should follow God, who is all-powerful, not Satan.

Memory Verse

This quarter, I Timothy 1:12-16 and II Corinthians 11:24-28; this week, I Timothy 1:14 - “The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.”

Lesson Background

If Paul had been told that he would become one of the most famous people in history, he might have laughed incredulously, yet God had far-reaching plans for His servant unimagined by the group of believers who had met to fast and pray in Syrian Antioch (note, this is a different place from Pisidian Antioch in Asia Minor). As the prophets and teachers, Barnabas (“son of encouragement”), Simeon called Niger (“black”; he was probably dark-skinned), Lucius of Cyrene (present-day Libya in North Africa), Manaen (meaning “comforter”) who had been brought up with Herod Antipas, and Saul met together, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them. So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off” (Acts 13:3-4). Scripture often records almost casually events that had enormous impact in the lives of people. Do we obey God as readily as did Saul and Barnabas? Note also that God acted when Christians prayed, and that sending forth the first missionaries was a function of the local church.

From Antioch, Paul and Barnabas traveled sixteen miles to the port of Seleucia, where they set sail for the island of Cyprus approximately sixty miles to the west. This one hundred and forty mile long by sixty mile wide island was famous for its copper mines and had been under Roman control since 57 B.C. Arriving

in Barnabas' home country (Acts 4:36), the two missionaries along with their helper, Barnabas' cousin John Mark, preached the Gospel in the synagogues of the Greek-influenced city of Salamis. This was probably not the first time these Jews had heard about Christ, since believers had come to Cyprus in the persecution following Stephen's death (Acts 11:19).

Paul, Barnabas, and John Mark then traveled across Cyprus to Paphos, presumably preaching the Gospel along the way. At Paphos, they were summoned to the proconsul of the island, Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man who wanted to hear the Word of God. Sergius Paulus' attendant, Elymas, a Jewish sorcerer and false prophet, tried to turn him from the faith, probably in part to protect his own position. But "Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked straight at Elymas and said, 'You are a child of the devil'" (contra. Elymas' Jewish name, Bar-Jesus, "son of Jesus") "'and an enemy of everything that is right!'" (Acts 13:9-10). Paul told Elymas that the Lord would make him blind for a while, which is exactly what occurred. "When the proconsul saw what had happened, he believed, for he was amazed at the teaching about the Lord" (Acts 13:12).

Sergius Paulus and Elymas both heard God's Word, yet one turned to God in faith and the other was further confirmed in his sin. Pray that your students will respond as Sergius Paulus did by believing in Christ, and not become hardened by sin as Elymas was. Pray also that God will use you mightily, as He did Paul, to proclaim His sovereign rule on the earth. Many Christians become fearful when they consider the enormity of evil in the world, but today's account should encourage us that Satan's strength is minimal when compared to God's omnipotence.

Knowledge Objectives - To know that the Holy Spirit told the church in Antioch to set apart Saul and Barnabas for special work, which they did after prayer, fasting and placing their hands on them; that Saul and Barnabas went to Seleucia, where they sailed to Salamis, and arriving at Salamis, proclaimed God's Word in Jewish synagogues assisted by Barnabas' cousin John Mark; that they traveled across Cyprus to Paphos, where they were summoned to see the proconsul Sergius Paulus, who believed when Paul and Barnabas told him about God in spite of the opposition of Bar-Jesus (Elymas), a sorcerer and false prophet, who Paul said would become blind because of his sin, which indeed immediately happened.

Behavioral Objectives - By God's grace, to follow Him, not Satan.

Lesson Procedure

Introduction - Ask your students if they have ever seen a magician perform. Question them as to whether he really uses magic to execute his tricks. Explain that sleight-of-hand performers use tricks such as hidden compartments, invisible thread, or duplicate props to do their amazing feats, but there is another type of magician who does not do tricks for fun. He is a sorcerer, someone who does unusual things by Satan's power. Of course, God tells us never to have anything to do with someone like that (Deuteronomy 18:9-13). Ask your children who is stronger, Satan or God, and tell them that in today's Bible story, Paul meets a sorcerer and shows him that God is more powerful than Satan.

BIBLE STORY

Read **Acts 13:1-13**, stopping to explain and discuss various concepts as you read. Focus on God's power and the necessity of choosing to follow Him, as did Sergius Paulus, not Satan, as did Elymas.

MAP STUDY

Hand out your students' maps and briefly review fundamentals as taught in last week's lesson. Have your students find Antioch on their maps. Point out that there were two cities named Antioch and show them their locations. Have your students draw a line connecting the first cities on Paul's missionary journey: Antioch, Seleucia, Salamis, and Paphos. Explain this as a sort of dot-to-dot activity. For example, you might say, "See the word on this part of your map which begins with the letter A? That word says 'Antioch.' Draw a line from the **dot** by that word to the **dot** by the nearby word which begins with an S. That word says 'Seleucia.'" If possible, demonstrate this first part of Paul's route with a paper Paul figure and a paper boat tacked to a large wall map.

STORY (optional)

THE SNEEDLES

Once upon a time in a far off land there lived a group of people called Sneedles. They were happy little creatures with rather large tomato-shaped heads. You or I might think them rather odd-looking, but they thought themselves quite handsome, for the only people they knew were other Sneedles.

One summer, two families of Sneedles went on vacation together. The children, Snap, Bim, Fud, Pud, and Timi, had a grand time together until one day they had to make an important decision.

"Race you to the top of the hill," called Snap, suiting action to word.

"I'll get there first!" answered Fud, scrambling after.

The Sneedles, having just finished a large picnic lunch, felt ready for any adventure, but since such adventure did not readily present itself, they contented themselves playing leapfrog, hide-and-seek, and tumbling down the hillside.

After a while Bim said, "You know, I think we ought to be starting for the inn soon."

"You're right," replied Snap. "Let's pack up the picnic things. . . ."

"I'll lead you to the inn," said a voice.

"Who are you?" asked the Sneedles.

"My name is Bludge and I would be glad to take you to the inn by a shortcut."

"But we are supposed to follow Snap. His father gave him directions," countered Fud.

"A shortcut would get us there quicker," said Pud.

"And the trip is so much easier," put in Bludge, "no hills to climb or rivers to cross."

"No thank you, sir; we must follow my father's directions," said Snap.

"Not me," insisted Pud. "You always think you know best, Snap. I'm tired and I'm going the easy way." Ignoring the chorus of protests, Pud started off with Bludge.

"We can't let her go alone. I'll go, too, to see that she doesn't get into any trouble," said Bim. "We'll meet you at the inn." And so the two groups set off.

It was not long before Snap, Fud, and Timi arrived at the inn, but there was no sign of Bim or Pud. "Some shortcut," said Fud.

But hours later, the children and their parents were worried. "They've been told never to follow a stranger," said Pud's father.

"He was very persuasive, Dad," Fud objected.

"That's no excuse," his father continued. "We'd better search the woods."

This they did, and late that night discovered Pud and Bim tied in an abandoned shack. "Daddy, Daddy!" cried the children. "Are we glad to see you!" So they were brought safe and sound to the inn, where they promised never again to follow a stranger.

Questions:

- Why should we not follow strangers?
- What will happen if we follow Satan?
- What will happen if we follow God?
- You do not need to answer this question out loud, but think, who will you follow?

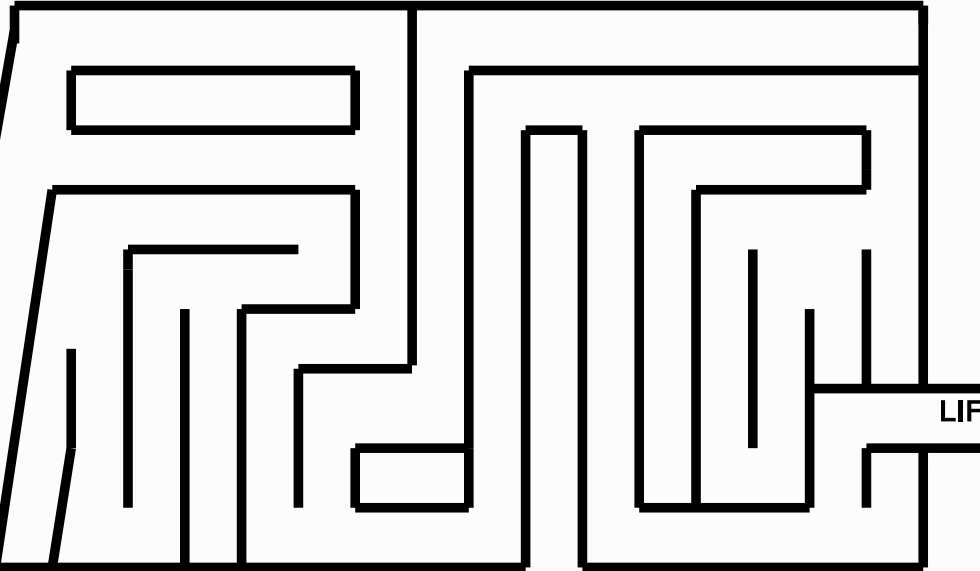
SONGS

You may wish to sing hymns about missions this quarter. If so, please see the list on the special Missions Home Helps page for this quarter. Also for today's lesson: "Obey My Voice" (Jeremiah 7:23); "Let God Arise" (Psalm 68:1); "Not By Might" (Zechariah 4:6); "The Weapons of Our Warfare" (II Corinthians 10:14); "Come Ye Sinners" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #472); "Come Every Soul" ("Only Trust Him," *Trinity Hymnal*, #675), "A Mighty Fortress" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #92).

Take Home Activity

Maze - God's Way/Satan's Way. Although salvation is by God's grace, your students must decide whether to follow God as Paul and Barnabas did, or Satan as did Elymas. Which way will they choose? Have them follow the maze to see that Satan's way leads to death, but God's way leads to life.

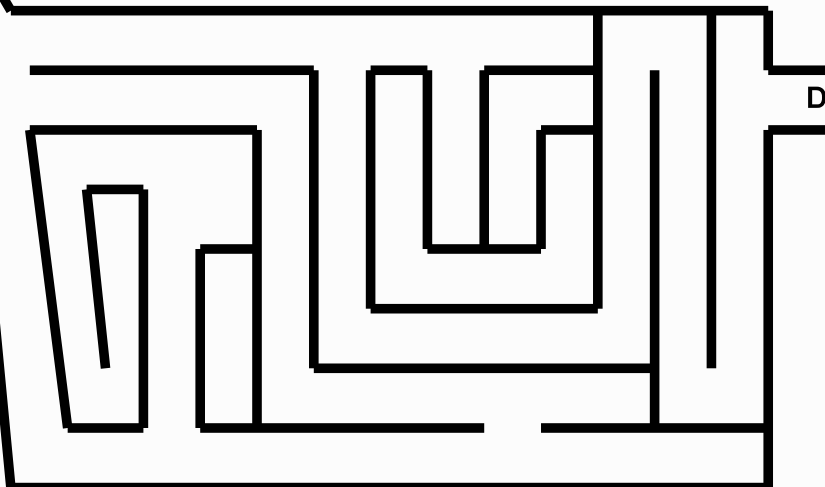
GOD'S
WAY



LIFE

Which way will you choose?

SATAN'S
WAY



DEATH

BIBLE PASSAGE - LESSON FOCUS

Acts 13:1-13 - We should follow God, who is all-powerful, as Paul, Barnabas, and Sergius Paulus did, not Satan, as Elymas did.

MEMORY VERSE

This quarter, I Timothy 1:12-16 and II Corinthians 11:24-28; this week, I Timothy 1:14 - “The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.”

SUGGESTED PROJECTS

1. God told the church in Antioch to set apart Paul and Barnabas for the work to which He had called them, which they did with prayer, fasting, and placing their hands on them. Has God sent forth missionaries from your local church? Find out the how, why, and the circumstances of their going to spread the Gospel. Pray for these people. Consider whether God might want you to witness for Him among a different group of people than you are now. How might one know this? (Discuss using Scriptural justification.)
2. God enabled Paul to triumph over Elymas the sorcerer and boldly proclaim the Gospel to Sergius Paulus. Pray that the Lord will give you power to conquer Satan and declare God’s Word.
3. Do one or more activities from the special Missions Home Helps.
4. Sing songs such as: “Obey My Voice” (Jeremiah 7:23); “Let God Arise” (Psalm 68:1); “Not By Might” (Zechariah 4:6); “The Weapons of Our Warfare” (II Corinthians 10:14); “Come Ye Sinners” (*Trinity Hymnal*, #472); “Come Every Soul” (“Only Trust Him,” *Trinity Hymnal*, #675), “A Mighty Fortress” (*Trinity Hymnal*, #92).

SUGGESTED PARENTAL READING

Scripture - Acts 4:36-37; Acts 13:13-14:5.

Other books about missions and missionaries (please see Missions Home Helps).

PAUL AT LYSTRA

Acts 14

Lesson Aim

To help students know that people are fickle, as were the crowds at Lystra, but God is faithful, as He was to Paul.

Memory Verse

This quarter, I Timothy 1:12-16 and II Corinthians 11:24-28; this week, I Timothy 1:15 - “Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners - of whom I am the worst.”

Lesson Background

Today’s lesson covers the second half of Paul’s first missionary journey. Paul and Barnabas traveled from Paphos to Perga, where John Mark left them, and then took a somewhat dangerous (due to bandits) road eighteen miles upland (to 3,600 feet) and inland to Pisidian Antioch. Antioch, located on the Anthios river, was the chief town and military center of the Roman province of Phrygia (southern Galatia); prominent landmarks in the city were an aqueduct and a large altar to a false god. When the Jews refused to accept the message of the Gospel, Paul and Barnabas shook the dust off their feet and journeyed ninety miles to Iconium, a prosperous commercial center famous for its weaving. Iconium was not a Roman colony and had a mixed Jewish, Greek, and Roman population. When Paul and Barnabas heard of a plot to stone them, they traveled eighteen miles to Lystra, another Roman military center and a rustic home to many aristocratic Romans, but few Jews. Paul and Barnabas’ unusual encounter with the people of Lystra is not as extraordinary as it seems, for local legends told of an earlier visit of Zeus and Hermes, and a temple to Zeus dominated the entrance to the city. Later the missionaries traveled fifty-five miles to the somewhat

uncultured town of Derbe and then back to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, where they appointed elders in the churches. Finally Paul and his companions returned home to Antioch on the Orontes via Perga and Attalia.

People are fickle. First the citizens of Lystra worshiped Paul as a god and later they stoned him. The crowd assumed that Paul, as the chief speaker, was Hermes the messenger of the gods, and that Barnabas, perhaps having a more imposing physical appearance than Paul, was Zeus, the ruler of the gods. Paul and Barnabas were, of course, horrified when they discovered the significance of the Lystrans' actions. Are we as ready to disavow others' praise when the glory belongs to God, as were Paul and Barnabas? When someone compliments us on our lovingkindness and unselfish actions, for example, do we give honor to the Lord or merely bask in their praise? We should not develop false modesty, but neither should we be fooled by the world's praise, which may occasionally do us honor for the wrong reasons.

The crowd at Lystra was changeable, but God is faithful (James 1:17). He helped Paul and Barnabas, and gave them power to preach the Gospel boldly and to perform miracles. Paul and Barnabas, too, were faithful in spite of suffering. They even courageously returned to nurture their new Christian brethren and appoint elders in the churches in Derbe, Lystra, and Iconium, towns where they had been persecuted. We can expect opposition if we are faithful to the Lord (II Timothy 3:12); may God enable us to remain true to Him.

Knowledge Objectives - To know some of the cities to which Paul traveled on his first missionary journey and the events that occurred at Lystra, including the healing of the lame man, the attempt by the crowd to worship Paul and Barnabas, their reaction to this, and Paul's eventual stoning as Jews from Antioch and Iconium won the crowd over to turn against the Christians.

Behavioral Objectives - By God's grace, to remain faithful to Him in spite of the world's opposition or praise.

Lesson Procedure

Introduction - Introduce the lesson approximately as follows: "How many of you have ever seen a weather vane? Would someone describe what one looks like for me? You know, some people are like a weather vane; they are changeable or fickle. One day they say they want to serve God and the next day they curse the Lord and rebel against Him. In today's Bible story, Paul and Barnabas meet some people who reacted in an extraordinary way to the missionaries and then changed their minds about them. First let's review what has happened to Paul and his companions thus far." Do so using the map study below.

MAP STUDY

Using your students' maps, review what happened in the first half of Paul's missionary journey. Allow those students who did not mark this on their maps to do so this week. Help your students mark the rest of Paul's first missionary journey on their maps using the same color pencil or marker they used to mark the first part of his trip.

BIBLE STORY

Read **Acts 14**, concentrating on **Acts 14:8-20** (you may tell Acts 14:1-7 and Acts 14:21-28 in your own words if you prefer). Bring in pertinent background facts as you read and then discuss the passage.

STORY

“Best Friends.” Present this as a puppet show or add narrative and tell as a story.

ACTIVITY

Language learning role-play - Part of Paul and Barnabas’ difficulties in Lystra arose from an apparent ignorance of the Lycaonian language. Discuss with your students how missionaries today must learn the language of the group of people to whom they will minister. Some languages can be learned in a school or from books, but some people have no written language. This means the people cannot read God’s Word in their own speech (counter such student objections as, “Why don’t they just learn English?”). Explain how difficult it would be for a missionary to learn an unwritten language. Ask your students how they would go about so doing. Give each of your children a card on which is printed a simple sentence. Have your students in turn try to communicate that sentence to the other children without using English. Tell your students that, as difficult as it was for them to have their sentences understood, it would be that much harder to communicate concepts such as love, forgiveness, and salvation to some cultures, or even such things as snow (e.g., Isaiah 1:18) in a jungle or desert setting. You may also wish to explain such concepts as tonal languages in which two words that sound the same except for their musical pitch can have completely contrary meanings, or the difficulty of even hearing where one word in a foreign language begins and another ends.

SONGS

I Thessalonians 5:16-18 (. . .”for this is the will of God”); add such verses as “Be faithful to the Lord” or “Give honor to the Lord”); “Great Is Thy Faithfulness” (*Trinity Hymnal*, #32); “Let Us With A Gladsome Mind” (*Trinity Hymnal*, #33); and songs about missions (see special Missions Home Helps).

Take Home Activity

Do one or more of the following:

1. **Weather Vane** - Have your students make this as a reminder that people may be fickle, changing directions like a weather vane, but God is faithful. Have your students cut a $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch square and two arrows ($\frac{1}{2}$ inch by 4 inches) from construction paper. On the square, they should write, N, S, E, and W (for north, south, east, and west) in appropriate places. They should then glue the two arrows together to form one arrow, leaving a half-inch space in the middle of the arrow unglued. Have them put a drinking straw through the unglued space in the arrow, then through the paper square, and finally into the bottom of a paper cup, which acts as a stand for the weather vane.
2. **Riddles** - Have your students take turns making up and asking each other “Who am I?” or “Where am I?” riddles about the people and places studied so far this quarter, for example: “I helped Paul on part of his first missionary journey, but then went home. Who am I?” or “There is a large altar to Zeus in this city. Where am I?” Your students should write down the riddles and their answers (help those who need it and do not criticize spelling or punctuation).
3. **First Missionary Journey Game** - Do this only if your students read and write well. See this week’s Home Helps for instructions.

BEST FRIENDS

Characters: **Tim**, a Christian
Harry, Tim's friend
Oscar, a bully

SCENE 1

[Tim and Harry are playing ball.]

Harry: "You know, Tim, this is fun. You're my best friend."
Tim: "I'm glad we're friends. Would you like to play some more after lunch?"
Harry: "Sure! That sounds great!"
Tim: "O.K. I'd better go now. See you later."

SCENE 2

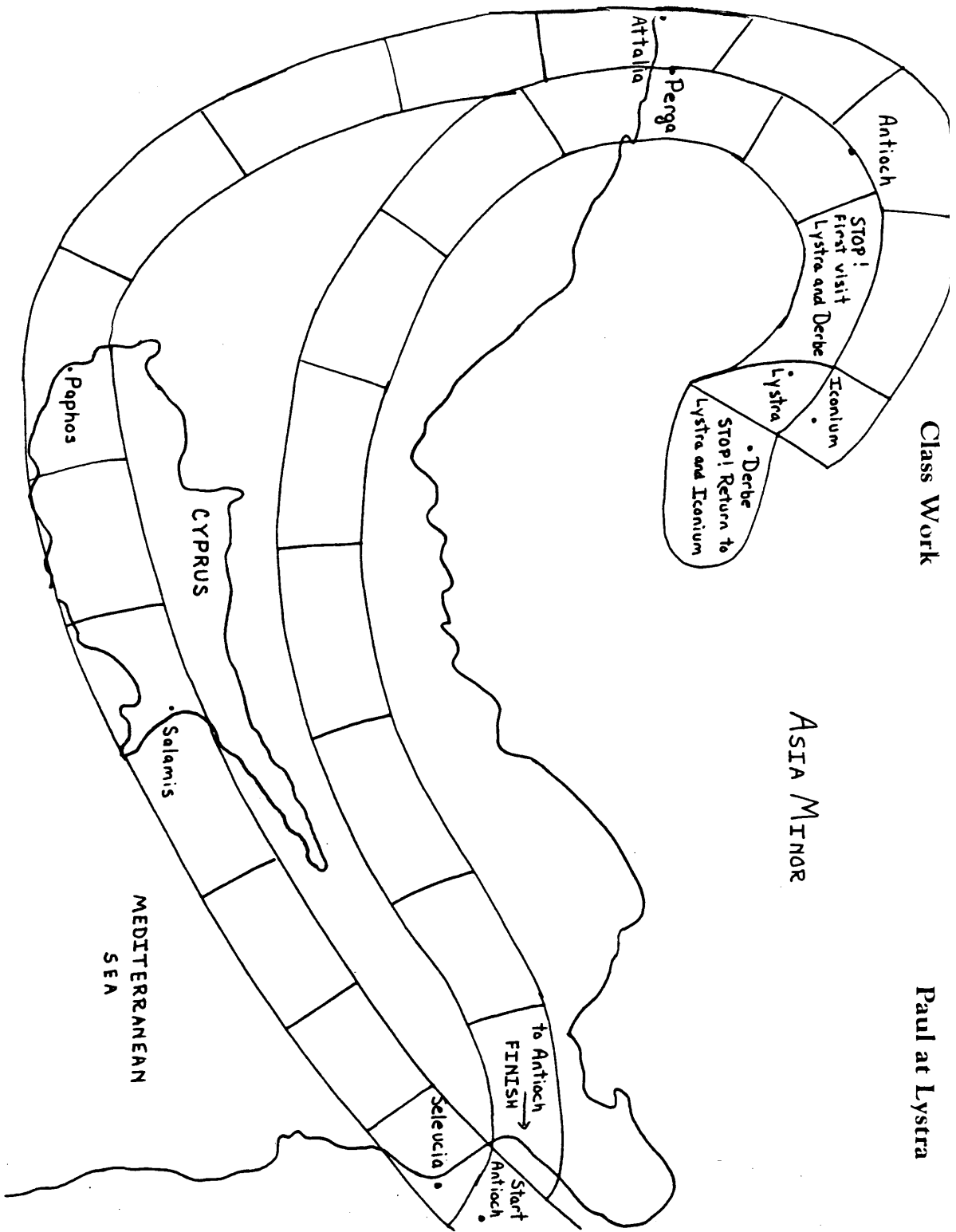
Oscar: "Hey, Harry! Wanna come over my house for ice cream sundaes?"
Harry: "I sure would! But I was supposed to wait here and play ball with Tim."
Oscar: "Aw, forget about him. You can play ball anytime, but I bet you don't often get an ice cream sundae with whipped cream and chocolate sauce, and a cherry on top."
Harry: "You aren't kidding! O.K. That's just too bad for Tim. He'll have to find something else to do. You know, Oscar, you're my best friend."

SCENE 3

Tim: "I wonder where Harry is. I hope he's not sick or something. Maybe I'd better see if he's home."

Questions:

- Was Harry a loyal friend?
- What should he have done when Oscar asked him to come to his house for ice cream? (Asked if Tim could come too and, if not, stayed and played with Tim.)
- Who should be our Best Friend? Will He be fickle like Harry?



Class Work

Paul at Lystra

BIBLE PASSAGE - LESSON FOCUS

Acts 14 - People are fickle, as was the crowd at Lystra, but God is faithful.

MEMORY VERSE

This quarter, I Timothy 1:12-16 and II Corinthians 11:24-28; this week, I Timothy 1:15 - "Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners - of whom I am the worst."

SUGGESTED PROJECTS

1. The crowd at Lystra was fickle in its response to Paul and Barnabas. Are you and your family members faithful to the Lord? Are you like a chameleon, which changes its color depending on its environment? Make a list of times when you might be tempted to waver in your commitment to the Lord, and a corresponding list of suggestions to help you remain steadfast in these situations. Ask God to help you do so. Write a story about someone's attempt to be faithful to God.
2. God is faithful to His children. Using a concordance, as a family, find and read verses about God's faithfulness and human faithfulness (or unfaithfulness) to the Lord. Think of Scripture stories that illustrate some of these verses.
3. Read and discuss Scripture concerning Paul's first missionary journey not covered in class: Acts 13:13-52; Acts 14:1-7, 21-28.
4. Paul and Barnabas refused to accept the worship of the crowd at Lystra. Do we ever accept honor that rightly belongs to God, for example by taking all the credit for our intelligence, physical beauty and abilities, or unselfish actions? As a family, think of times when you might be tempted to accept for yourself praise that God deserves. Discuss how you can bring credit to the Lord for what He has done in your life without false modesty.
5. Do one or more projects from the special Missions Home Helps sheet for this quarter.
6. Help your child make up a Paul's First Missionary Journey game. Using the game board, fill in several squares with instructions such as "Land on Cyprus; lose one turn preaching at Salamis" or Return to Lystra and Iconium to encourage the churches." Use buttons for markers to move around the board and flip a coin to move one ("heads") or two ("tails") spaces. The winner can be the first person to return to Antioch, but since the object of Paul's trip was to glorify God and preach the Gospel, not to return to Antioch quickly, the following procedure would be better. Make up a list of questions about this quarter's lessons or general Bible knowledge and write them on cards. On his turn, a player moves the proper number of spaces indicated by his coin flip and takes a card. If he answers the question correctly, he may keep the card; if he does not, he returns the card to the bottom of the pile of cards. The player with the most cards at the end of the game (i.e., the one who

has correctly answered the most questions) wins. If the game is played in this way, some instructions on the game board might relate to the number of questions a player receives, e.g., “Sergius Paulus asks Paul questions; Take two questions.”

7. Sing songs such as: I Thessalonians 5:16-18 (. . .”for this is the will of God”); add such verses as “Be faithful to the Lord” or “Give honor to the Lord”); “Great Is Thy Faithfulness” (*Trinity Hymnal*, #32); “Let Us With A Gladsome Mind” (*Trinity Hymnal*, #33); and songs about missions (see special Missions Home Helps).

SUGGESTED PARENTAL READING

Scripture - Acts 13:13-52; Acts 14; James 1:17; II Timothy 2:9-13; 3:12; Ephesians 4:14; I Thessalonians 5:24; I Corinthians 15:58; 4:2; Hebrews 3:14; 6:17-20; I Peter 5:7-11.

THE JERUSALEM COUNCIL

Acts 15:1-35

Lesson Aim

That your students will know that, as concluded by the Jerusalem Council, that in Christ “there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female” (Galatians 3:28), and that Christians are saved by grace through faith.

Memory Verse

This quarter, I Timothy 1:12-16 and II Corinthians 11:24-28; this week, I Timothy 1:16 - “But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display His unlimited patience as an example for those who would believe on Him and receive eternal life.”

Lesson Background

God had made it clear that the way of salvation was open to the Gentiles (through the events of Acts 10 and Paul’s fruitful ministry), yet some Jewish believers still insisted that converts must be circumcised and obey the law of Moses to be saved. To settle this controversy, Paul, Barnabas, and several other believers from Antioch went to see the elders and apostles in Jerusalem. After much discussion, James (Jesus’ brother, traditionally the first head of the church in Jerusalem and martyred after the death of Festus) and other leaders decided to send a letter with Paul, Barnabas, Judas, and Silas (see II Corinthians 1:19; I Thessalonians 1:1; I Peter 5:12) to the Gentiles. This letter exempted them from keeping the fine points of the Jewish law except that they were to abstain from food sacrificed to idols (possibly to avoid controversy with their “weaker” kosher-keeping brethren) from “blood” (either from murder or from eating animals with blood in them), from the meat of strangled animals, and from sexual immorality. How binding these regulations were seems uncertain, but the concluding phrase, “you will do well to avoid these things” (Acts 15:29), would seem to indicate that they would prosper if they followed these instructions, but that their

salvation was not dependent on their keeping them (contra. the Judaizers and their circumcision requirement). The opening of the letter served to assure the Gentile believers that this communication contained the authoritative teaching of the church as agreed upon by the Jerusalem Council and that the people who had visited them previously did not have official backing.

From our historical vantage point, the Judaizers' convictions may seem foolish, but we should remember that their point of view made sense to them. God had dealt with the Jewish people for thousands of years according to a certain set of statutes. A man who wanted to obey God was circumcised, as had been Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Why would God suddenly nullify regulations that had been established for centuries? The broad, sweeping changes instituted by Christ were difficult for the Jewish people to grasp. Even Peter seems to have succumbed to the pressure of those who refused to accept Gentile believers into full fellowship (Galatians 2). Some scholars maintain that Paul wrote Galatians from Ephesus during his third missionary tour, but it seems more likely to have been sent from Antioch shortly before the Jerusalem Council or brought during the trip to Jerusalem mentioned in Acts 11:30. In this case, the events of Galatians 2 would probably have taken place during a private interview in Antioch before the public meeting in Jerusalem.

We can learn several things from the conclusions of the Jerusalem Council. First of all, salvation is by grace through faith in Christ. No one can earn favor with God by being circumcised, obeying the law of Moses, or by any work of righteousness. Secondly, since the Lord accepts into His kingdom Jew and Greek, rich and poor, male and female - in fact, all kinds of people - we should love and accept those Christian brothers who are different from us. We can also see from this passage the importance of standing up for the truth as did James, Peter, and Paul, and the way in which the Holy Spirit can bring unity to a strife-torn body. May He do so in our churches as we seek to obey the Lord in these matters.

Knowledge Objectives - To know that after Paul's first missionary journey, a disagreement arose in the church about whether or not Gentile believers had to keep the requirements of the law of Moses, and that it was decided, with the support of Peter and James, that since all Christians are saved by grace through faith in Christ, they did not need to keep the entire ceremonial law; that the apostles and elders wrote a letter to the Gentile churches to this effect and sent it by the hand of Paul, Barnabas, Judas, and Silas.

Behavioral Objectives - By God's grace, to admit humbly that salvation is by grace alone and to show love to all kinds of Christians.

Lesson Procedure

BIBLE STORY

Because of the length and nature of today's passage, it would probably be better to tell the story in your own words approximately as follows: "When Paul returned from his first missionary journey, he found out that not everyone was happy with the work he had done, or at least with what he taught. To what group of people did Paul proclaim the Gospel? That's right, he ministered primarily among the Gentiles, those people who were not Jews." (At this point, if desired, briefly review the events studied so far this quarter. Then continue with today's Bible story.)

"Some men came down from Judea to Antioch and told the Christians that they had to obey the customs taught by Moses in order to be saved. In the Old Testament, God gave the Jewish people many rules. Some were laws, such as the Ten Commandments, which talked about loving God, not stealing or

murdering people, and other decrees that are always important to obey. No one can obey these perfectly, however, and no one can be saved by obeying them. Some rules concerned the proper way to sacrifice animals or regulations about governing the nation of Israel. These sorts of things were fulfilled in Christ and did not apply to Gentiles. If Christ died to pay for the sins of His children, there is no longer any reason for them to sacrifice animals to obtain God's forgiveness. The men who came from Judea to Antioch, however, seemed to think that obeying this ceremonial law was just as important as obeying the moral law (such as the Ten Commandments)."

"Paul and Barnabas disputed sharply with these men and then went to Jerusalem to question the apostles and elders about the matter. As they traveled through Phoenicia and Samaria, they told how the Gentiles had been converted, which made the Christians there very glad. At the meeting in Jerusalem a group of Pharisees who had become Christians insisted that the Gentiles must obey the laws of Moses, but Peter said that God had chosen him to preach to the Gentiles, and that if God gave the Holy Spirit to the Gentiles as well as the Jews and purified them through faith, why should the Gentiles have to obey the law to be saved, a thing that not even the Jews, God's chosen people, could do? Then Paul and Barnabas told about the miraculous signs and wonders God had done among the Gentiles, and James, Jesus' brother, quoting the Old Testament, said that he too thought that Gentiles should not have to obey the whole ceremonial law. The apostles and elders at Jerusalem then decided to write a letter to the Gentile churches telling them that they would not have to obey the whole ceremonial law, but that it would be wise for them to obey a few rules about which they wrote to them. They chose Paul, Barnabas, Judas, and Silas to take this letter to the Gentile churches."

Read **Acts 15:30-35**.

STORY

SO MANY DIFFERENT PEOPLE

"Mama, Mama, look at that ugly man over there," little Vicky called out as she and her mother found a place to sit in the crowded church.

"Shh, Vicky, be quiet! That's not a nice thing to say."

"But Mama, look at him. His face is all shiny and bumpy and strange looking. He scares me," she whimpered.

Mrs. Jones glanced in the direction Vicky was pointing. "Oh, Vicky," she said excitedly, "that's Jesse Wright. I haven't seen him in years. I guess his face does seem ugly when you first see it. It got that way because he was burned trying to rescue some children from an apartment building that had caught on fire. Don't be afraid of him. Look at his kind eyes and smiling mouth. Mr. Wright loves Jesus very much."

"That man loves Jesus?" Vicky turned to her mother, astonished. "But he doesn't go to our church and he looks like a monster, well maybe a kind monster, but still, how can he be a Christian?"

"He's a Christian because Jesus saved him, like He saved me and a lot of other people too. You don't have to look beautiful for God to love you. You don't have to do anything except believe the Lord."

Vicky gazed thoughtfully over the congregation. "How about that fat lady over there? Can God love fat people, Mama?"

"Why, that's Mrs. Thomas. She surely does know the Lord. She taught Sunday School for years and years, and now she helps out bringing meals to old people. Of course, those things don't make her a Christian any more than being heavy or skinny does."

"Look, Mama, there's a white man over there." Vicky nudged her mother excitedly. "Does he know Jesus?"

“I don’t know, honey,” her mother replied. “The Lord saves white people as well as black people and Spanish people, Chinese people, Indians - all kinds of people. But I don’t know if that man knows Jesus. We can pray that he will come to know God if he does not already.”

“O.K. Mama. I never knew God loved so many different people.”

SONGS

“Jesus Loves the Little Children” (change to “. . . all kinds of children in the world” for proper theology); “Not What My Hands Have Done” (*Trinity Hymnal*, #461); “Marvelous Grace of Our Loving Lord” (*Trinity Hymnal*, #465); “Come Ye Sinners” (*Trinity Hymnal*, #472).

Take Home Activity

Collage - Make a “**God Loves All Kinds of People**” collage. Have your students print “God Loves All Kinds of People” on the top of a large piece of paper or poster board and then glue on pictures cut from old magazines showing many kinds of people. The pictures should overlap and cover the entire paper if possible (see Year I, Quarter 4, Lesson 11).

Poem/Story - Have your children write a poem or story about the love God has for all types of people and/or the love we should show to different people (for example, have them describe a situation involving the meeting of Christians from different cultures).

Who is the Real Christian? Have different puppets represent different people who think they are Christians for different reasons. For example, one can say he’s a Christian because he’s been baptized, another because he goes to church, and a third because Jesus saved him. You may do this or have your students operate the puppets. You should tell your students that, of course, puppets cannot become Christians. Do not do this activity by having your students act out the different parts because they may become confused and think that they or their fellow students are or are not Christians because of the characters they portrayed. If you prefer, you may have your students make a poster, drawing figures with speech “bubbles” coming out of their mouths, comic strip style, each figure representing a different point of view as in the puppet role play.

BIBLE PASSAGE - LESSON FOCUS

Acts 15:1-35 - As concluded by the Jerusalem Council, in Christ “there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female” (Galatians 3:28), and Christians are saved by grace through faith.

MEMORY VERSE

This quarter, I Timothy 1:12-16 and II Corinthians 11:24-28; this week, I Timothy 1:16 - “But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display His unlimited patience as an example for those who would believe on Him and receive eternal life.”

SUGGESTED PROJECTS

1. Work on a project from the special Missions Home Helps.
2. Because of the nature and length of today’s Scripture passage, your child’s teacher probably related the Bible story in her own words rather than reading directly from the Bible. You may wish to read and discuss the passage (Acts 15:1-35) this week.
3. Certain people mentioned in Acts 15 taught that a man needed to be circumcised according to the custom of Moses to be saved. They were wrong; salvation is by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Our good works can add nothing to the finished work of Christ. Do we have a hidden assumption of regulations necessary for salvation, requirements such as baptism, church membership, the “proper” social class or educational level, that must be met before we consider others worthy of our fellowship? Discuss the fact that in Christ Jesus “There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female” (Galatians 3:28). Help your family get to know a Christian whom you might have difficulty accepting as your brother or sister in the Lord.
4. Help your child write a poem or a story about God’s love for all kinds of people or the love we should show for all kinds of people, for example a story about meeting someone from a different culture.
5. Discuss with your family the fact that salvation is by grace through faith in Christ (Ephesians 2:8-9). Using puppets, role-play people saying why they think they are Christians and have your children decide whether, by what the puppets are saying (e.g., “I’m a Christian because I go to church”), whether or not they would probably be Christians (if the puppets were people). You may do this activity by making a “Who is the Real Christian?” poster, drawing comic strip characters voicing the different points of view (as in the puppet role-play) in “speech bubbles.”
6. Sing songs such as: “Jesus Loves the Little Children” (change to “. . . all kinds of children in the world” for proper theology); “Not What My Hands Have Done” (*Trinity Hymnal*, #461); “Marvelous Grace of Our Loving Lord” (*Trinity Hymnal*, #465); “Come Ye Sinners” (*Trinity Hymnal*, #472).

SUGGESTED PARENTAL READING

Scripture - Ephesians 2; Galatians; James 2:1; Hebrews 3; 4:14-5:10; Hebrews 7-10.

Books about missions and cross-cultural evangelism and missionary biographies (see Missions Home Helps sheet).

PAUL AND JOHN MARK

Acts 13:13; Acts 15:36-41; II Timothy 4:11

Lesson Aim

That your students will know that, as Paul forgave John Mark, who served the Lord again in spite of past failure, we should forgive others.

Memory Verse

This quarter, I Timothy 1:12-16 and II Corinthians 11:24-28; this week, review I Timothy 1:12-16.

Lesson Background

The Bible paints a realistic portrait of its characters. In today's Scripture passage, two faithful and respected missionaries quarrel (the Greek term is a strong one) and set off in opposite directions to spread the Word of God. We cannot be sure whether Paul or Barnabas was right in his opinion regarding the value of John Mark accompanying them on their second missionary journey, although they were both probably, at least in part, blameworthy in the dispute. Barnabas' defense and forgiveness of John Mark seems in keeping with Christian love and highly reminiscent of his earlier support of the new convert Paul. Yet Paul knew the rigors of the journey and perhaps was concerned for John Mark, as well as wanting nothing to hinder the work of the Gospel. That Paul and his new partner Silas were "commended by the brothers to the grace of the Lord" (Acts 15:40), while nothing of this sort is mentioned about Barnabas and John Mark, need not necessarily indicate a rejection of their ministry by the church or the Lord. The important thing to realize is that God apparently brought reconciliation between the disputing brothers in later years, for in his second letter to Timothy (Timothy who, in a certain sense, took John Mark's place on the second missionary journey), Paul wrote, "Get Mark and bring him with you, because he is helpful to me in my ministry" (II Timothy 4:11). Are we willing to forgive those who have disappointed or even sinned against us? Do we

consider our own failures irreparable, or do we accept the Lord's forgiveness and attempt to serve Him anew, as did John Mark?

Acts 16:1-12 is not part of today's Bible story as such (although you may include it if you wish), but will be used in today's map study. Paul and Silas revisited Derbe and Lystra, traveling through Syria and Cilicia rather than arriving from the west as in Paul's first missionary journey. At Lystra, Paul met a young disciple named Timothy whose mother was Jewish but whose father was Greek. Although Paul did not force circumcision on Gentile converts, he had Timothy circumcised, probably because Timothy was a Jew, in an effort not to antagonize Jewish believers in the area who were aware of the situation. Paul and his companions then traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia by Mysia to the city of Troas. There Paul received his vision of a man from Macedonia asking Paul to help his people. In verse 10, the pronoun of the narration changes from "they" to "we," from which we assume that Luke joined Paul, Silas, and Timothy at this point. The group set out from Troas across the Aegean Sea to the island of Samothrace and on to the cities of Neapolis (the terminus of the famed Egnation Road) and Philippi, a Roman colony, in Macedonia. Next week we will study the way God worked mightily in that city.

Knowledge Objectives - To know that Paul and Barnabas had a sharp dispute over whether or not to take John Mark, who had deserted them on their first missionary journey, with them on a second missionary journey; that Paul, commended by the church, took Silas to revisit the Galatian churches while Barnabas and John Mark headed toward Cyprus; but that later Paul and John Mark were reconciled, for Paul wrote Timothy to bring John Mark because he was helpful to him in his ministry.

Behavioral Objectives - By God's grace, to forgive those who sin against us and ask for and accept forgiveness from God and others when we sin.

Lesson Procedure

Introduction - Ask your students whether or not they ever argue with their friends or brothers and sisters. Ask whether it is good to argue, why they argue, how they feel when they argue, how to prevent arguments, and what to do when a dispute has taken place. Then pose this question, "Do you think anyone in the Bible ever argued?" Explain that today's Bible story concerns a sharp dispute between two people about whom we have been studying.

BIBLE STORY

Acts 15:36-41; also **Acts 13:13** and **II Timothy 4:11**. Today's Bible story would be a good one to tell in your own words, supplying probable details and asking questions as you tell it, as well as reading the appropriate Scripture passages. You may wish to include material from **Acts 16:1-12**. Be sure to differentiate between what the Scripture actually says and suppositional details by using such phrases as "it seems" or "probably" or "perhaps." First and second graders are generally not very adept at differentiating between fact and conjecture, so be as clear as possible in this.

MAP STUDY

Have your students trace the first part of Paul’s second missionary journey (i.e., draw a line from city to city) on their maps. They should use a different color felt-tipped pen than they did for the first missionary journey. They should draw their lines between the following cities and through the following regions (regions are in parentheses):

Antioch ➔ (Syria) ➔ (Cilicia) ➔ Derbe ➔ Lystra ➔ (Mysia) ➔ Troas ➔ (Samothrace - islands in the Aegean Sea) ➔ Neapolis ➔ Philippi

STORY

“The Hike.” This may be told as a story or used as a play. If used as a play, duplicate copies and put them back into the Teacher’s Manual for use in future years.

Questions:

- What did Harry do to hurt his friends? How did they respond?
- What did John Mark do to hurt his friends? How did Paul and Barnabas respond? **Note** - There are times when certain things may be impossible for us to do, but we should always try our best (do all to the glory of God).
- Are there times when people disappoint us, let us down, or hurt us? Do we forgive these people when they are sorry?

SONGS

“A New Commandment” (John 13:34); “This Is My Commandment” (John 15:12); “Beloved Let Us Love One Another” (I John 4:7-8); “Jesus Sinners Doth Receive” (*Trinity Hymnal*, #473); “Marvelous Grace Of Our Loving Lord” (*Trinity Hymnal*, #465).

Take Home Activity

Clothespin Figures - Make clothespin figures of Paul, Barnabas, and John Mark as follows: Have your students draw faces on straight (non-spring type) clothespins with permanent ink felt-tipped markers. They should then sew or glue on fabric scraps for clothes or paint clothes on the clothespins.

THE HIKE

Characters: **Tim**, a Christian boy
Kermit, Tim's friend
Harry, Tim's friend

Scene 1

Kermit: "I'm really looking forward to this hike, Tim, aren't you?"

Tim: "I sure am! Are you sure you want to come with us, Harry? It's going to be pretty rough, lots of walking and these packs are heavy. You're not used to it."

Harry : "Naw, it'll be easy."

Scene 2

Harry : "Hey, guys, can't we stop to rest again. I'm bushed!"

Tim: "Sorry, Harry, but if we don't keep walking we won't get to camp by lunch time or home before dark."

Harry : "Well, I can't take any more. I'm going home now."

Kermit: "You can't! We need you to help carry the equipment."

Harry : "You'll just have to carry it yourselves. I'm sorry, but I'm going home."

Tim: "Now what'll we do?"

Scene 3

Kermit: "Well, we made it, with or without Harry's help. That guy sure bugs me. That's the last time I take him on a camping trip."

Tim: "Yeah, I was angry too. He was wrong to quit like that. It's not as if he were sick or exhausted or something, but perhaps we were a bit rough on him. That was the first hike he's ever been on."

Harry : "Hi, guys. I know you're angry with me, but please listen a minute. I shouldn't have backed out on you like that and left you to carry all that stuff no matter how tired I was. Will you please forgive me?"

T & K: "That's O.K., Harry."

Tim: "You were wrong, but we understand and forgive you. Next weekend we plan to go on a short hike, just up to the lake and back. You want to come?"

Harry : "I sure would. Thanks, guys."

BIBLE PASSAGE - LESSON FOCUS

Acts 13:13; 15:36-41; II Timothy 4:11 - As Paul forgave John Mark, who served the Lord again in spite of past failure, we should forgive others.

MEMORY VERSE

This quarter, I Timothy 1:12-16 and II Corinthians 11:24-28; this week, review I Timothy 1:12-16.

SUGGESTED PROJECTS

1. Paul argued with Barnabas about John Mark, but later asked Timothy to bring John Mark with him because he was useful in the ministry (II Timothy 4:11). Are there people with whom you and your family need to become reconciled? Read Matthew 5:21-26, 38-48 and discuss. Plan specific ways to bring love and forgiveness to those who have hurt, disappointed, or sinned against you.
2. Children are often quick to argue but also ready to forgive. Encourage your children in the latter and plan ways to lessen the frequency of the former. Make a list together of things about which and times when disputes are likely, especially among family members. What steps could be taken to improve matters (e.g., one child could not use another's things without permission, one child could divide a piece of cake and the other decide which piece to take, or the children could take turns choosing what game to play or television program to watch)?
3. Sometimes when a person sins, he feels that he can never again serve the Lord. Encourage your children with the example of John Mark (note, however, that Scripture does not say that John Mark necessarily sinned in leaving Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey). Find other incidents in Scripture where a person was restored to fellowship and usefulness after sin.
4. Do one or more activities from the Missions Home Helps.
5. Sing songs such as "A New Commandment" (John 13:34); "This Is My Commandment" (John 15:12); "Beloved Let Us Love One Another" (I John 4:7-8); "Jesus Sinners Doth Receive" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #473); "Marvelous Grace Of Our Loving Lord" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #465).

SUGGESTED PARENTAL READING

Scripture - Acts 16:1-12; I Peter 5:13; Matthew 5:21-26, 38-48; Philippians 2:14-16.

PAUL AT PHILIPPI

Acts 16:11-40

Lesson Aim

That your students will know that they should “rejoice in the Lord always,” as did Paul and Silas in prison at Philippi.

Memory Verse

This quarter, I Timothy 1:12-16 and II Corinthians 11:24-28; this week, II Corinthians 11:24 - “Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one.”

Lesson Background

Most of us have difficulty even comprehending the suffering endured by Paul (see II Corinthians 11:24-28), yet God enabled the apostle to praise Him in tribulation, as we see in today’s Bible story about his visit to Philippi. Philippi was a Roman colony that had been rebuilt in approximately 356 B.C. and named by Philip of Macedon, the father of Alexander the Great. Luke tells us that it was the leading city of the district (Acts 16:12, although Amphipolis was the capital of this district, one of four Roman districts in Macedonia). Philippi, a city of many veterans and home of a school of medicine, was self-governing and exempt from paying tribute to the emperor. Philippi apparently did not have a synagogue, however, for Lydia and the other women worshiped God by a river outside the city (a *minyán* or ten Jewish males was necessary to form a synagogue).

Lydia was a native of Thyatira in Asia, a locale noted for the production of a turkey red dye made from madder root that substituted for the more expensive crimson dye extracted from the murex shell. Responding to the Gospel message preached by Paul, Lydia believed in the Lord and readily shared her possessions with the brethren.

One day as Paul and his companions were going to the place of prayer by the river, they met a slave girl who had a spirit by which she predicted the future. For several days she followed the group, shouting, "These men are servants of the Most High God who are telling you the way to be saved" (Acts 16:17 cf. Mark 1:21-28; 5:1-20). She kept this up for many days. Finally Paul became so troubled that, in the name of Jesus, he commanded the spirit to leave her, which it did. Demon possession is a grave matter; we should be prepared to do battle with the powers of darkness as Paul did. It is unclear why Paul did not immediately cast out the demon, or what was the exact cause of his annoyance as the girl continued to harass the group. Whatever his reservations or reasons for casting out the demon, Paul's action brought about reprisal by the owners of the slave girl, who realized that their source of profit had been eliminated.

The girl's owners brought Paul and Silas before the magistrates, complaining that their Jewish customs were contrary to Roman customs (which was forbidden, cf. earlier attacks on Paul by Jews), and that they were throwing the city into an uproar (this sounded more noble than complaining of their economic losses). "The crowd joined in the attack against Paul and Silas, and the magistrates ordered them to be stripped and beaten" (Acts 16:22 - this was standard Roman procedure) and then thrown into prison. Paul and Silas rejoiced, however, that they could suffer for Jesus' sake, for they knew that the same God who was powerful enough to free a slave girl from the grip of a demon was in control of their situation as well. So they sang and rejoiced in the Lord, bearing witness to the other prisoners of His grace. But the Lord did not intend to leave Paul and Silas in prison. No matter how securely they were bound, God could set them free, which He did by sending an earthquake.

Suicide was highly regarded in Roman society and the jailer, realizing that death was the required punishment for allowing prisoners to escape (Acts 12:19), prepared to take his own life so that he would perish honorably. But Paul shouted, "Don't harm yourself! We are all here" (Acts 16:28), and the jailer fell trembling before Paul and Silas and asked them what he could do to be saved. The word used can indicate physical (e.g., from the earthquake and God's power, or from the wrath of his superiors?) or spiritual salvation, and the jailer probably had the latter at least somewhat in mind. Paul answered him with a classic summation of the Gospel, including the offer of hope to the jailer's family. Believers' children do not automatically gain entrance into the kingdom of God, but the Bible takes the unity of the family seriously, and a parent's spiritual commitment can have a marked effect on his offspring.

Paul and Silas obeyed the local authorities, but also complained about the injustice that had been done them. Roman citizens could not be beaten, whether guilty or innocent (however, to claim Roman citizenship falsely was punishable by death), and they had a right to a trial, so the magistrates had broken Roman law in their treatment of Paul and Silas. The magistrates released them, but asked them to leave Philippi to avoid further trouble and to appease the local population.

Knowledge Objectives - To know that Paul and his companions went to Philippi, where they spoke the Word of God to some women who worshiped outside of town by a river; one of the women, named Lydia, came to believe in the Lord and asked the missionaries to her house; to know that, one day going to the river, Paul and his friends met a girl possessed by a spirit that enabled her to tell the future, which Paul cast out, causing the girl's owners to become incensed when they realized that their hope of continuing to make a profit by her was gone; that these men stirred up a crowd and brought Paul and Silas before the magistrates, who had Paul and Silas stripped, beaten, and put in prison. To know that Paul and Silas rejoiced and worshiped the Lord in prison, witnessing to their fellow prisoners; that God sent an earthquake to release them; that the jailer, thinking that the prisoners had escaped, attempted suicide, but when Paul shouted to stop him, the jailer fell before Paul and Silas and asked what he could do to be saved. To know that Paul replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved," which he did; the jailer took Paul and Silas home with him, bound their

wounds, and he and his family were baptized. The next morning Paul complained to the magistrates about their unjust treatment because they were Roman citizens; the magistrates released them and asked them to leave town.

Behavioral Objectives - By God's grace, to rejoice in the Lord always.

Lesson Procedure

Introduction - Review last week's lesson using your students' maps. Those students who did not mark the first part of Paul's second missionary journey may do so at this time.

BIBLE STORY

Read and discuss today's Scripture passage in three sections (verses 11-15, 16-24, 25-40). Be sure to point out Lydia's response to God's Word and her generosity, God's power over Satan, and Paul and Silas' joyful witness in prison. Explain unfamiliar terms and concepts such as demon possession, magistrates, and stocks, and use background material that you feel will be helpful.

ACTIVITY

Paper Chains - Have your children make paper chains to remind them to rejoice in the Lord always, even as Paul and Silas did in prison. Have your children cut construction paper strips one inch by six inches (or slightly smaller; you may do this before class if you prefer). Have them tape or glue the ends of one strip together to form a loop. Your students should then put another strip through this loop and tape or glue its ends together, forming the beginning of a chain. Continue in this manner until the chain is about a foot long. Tape the two end loops of your students' chains around their wrists. If you desire, have your students print "Rejoice in the Lord Always" on their chains.

DRAMA

Dramatize Paul and Silas' arrest and imprisonment (verses 19-40). You may use the paper chains made above as props.

SONGS

"Rejoice in the Lord Always" (Philippians 4:4); "In Everything Give Thanks" (I Thessalonians 5:16-17); "Rejoice the Lord is King" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #310); "Rejoice Ye Pure in Heart" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #604).

Take Home Activity

Worksheet - Have your students color in the boxes of the people who match the descriptions at the left. When they are finished, have them turn the picture sideways to see an early Christian symbol (usually drawn without the eye). The answers for the Worksheet are on the next page.

Class Work

Paul at Philippi

	Silas	Sergius Paulus	Lydia	Slave Girl	Jailer	Barnabas	Paul
I was possessed by a demon							
I was a free (not slave) person living in Philippi							
I was with Paul when Elymas became blind							
I was in a prison building when an earthquake struck							
I told the women worshipping at a river about Jesus							
I travelled from Galatia across Asia to Macedonia							
I was a Roman citizen put in jail							
I came from Cyprus							
I was a Philippian who believed in Jesus							
I was a female							
I was a man who was saved through Paul's ministry							
I traveled with Paul on a missionary journey							

How did Paul and Silas feel in prison?

How did Paul and Silas act in prison?

Class Work

Paul at Philippi

	Silas	Sergius Paulus	Lydia	Slave Girl	Jailer	Barnabas	Paul
I was possessed by a demon				X			
I was a free (not slave) person living in Philippi			X		X		
I was with Paul when Elymas became blind		X				X	
I was in a prison building when an earthquake struck	X				X		X
I told the women worshipping at a river about Jesus	X						X
I travelled from Galatia across Asia to Macedonia	X						X
I was a Roman citizen put in jail	X						X
I came from Cyprus		X				X	
I was a Philippian who believed in Jesus			X	X	X		
I was a female			X	X			
I was a man who was saved through Paul's ministry		X			X		
I traveled with Paul on a missionary journey	X					X	

How did Paul and Silas feel in prison?

How did Paul and Silas act in prison?

BIBLE PASSAGE - LESSON FOCUS

Acts 16:11-40 - We should rejoice in the Lord always, as did Paul and Silas in prison at Philippi.

MEMORY VERSE

This quarter, I Timothy 1:12-16 and II Corinthians 11:24-26; this week, II Corinthians 11:24-
“Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one.”

SUGGESTED PROJECTS

1. Read (and sing) Philippians 4:4 and I Thessalonians 5:16-17 and discuss as a family. Apply these verses to specific situations involving your family members. Ask God to help you rejoice and witness in your trials, as did Paul and Silas.
2. Be ready to share your Christian faith at any time, as Paul did with the Philippian jailer. If you do not know Christ, speak to your child's Sunday School teacher or a pastor of this church about how you can have the same joy as Paul, Silas, Lydia, and the jailer.
3. God redeemed the Philippian jailer and his whole household. Earnestly pray for the salvation of those in your family who do not know Christ.
4. Pray for and do something practical to help those who are in prison for their Christian faith, as were Paul and Silas.
5. Plan a specific way you can share what you have with God's servants, as Lydia did.
6. Sing songs of rejoicing such as: “Rejoice in the Lord Always” (Philippians 4:4); “In Everything Give Thanks” (I Thessalonians 5:16-17); “Rejoice the Lord is King” (*Trinity Hymnal*, #310); “Rejoice Ye Pure in Heart” (*Trinity Hymnal*, #604).

SUGGESTED PARENTAL READING

Scripture - Philippians; I Thessalonians 5:16-17; Acts 5:41; Mark 1:21-28; Mark 5:1-20; Acts 17; Job.

Books - Read books about suffering and rejoicing, as well as continuing to read missionary biographies:

The Hiding Place (Corrie ten Boom with J. and E. Sherrill, Revell, 1971.)

Where Is God When It Hurts? (Philip Yancey, Zondervan, 1977.)

Affliction (Edith Schaeffer, Revell, 1978.)

PAUL, PRISCILLA, AND AQUILA

Acts 18:1-4, 18-28

Lesson Aim

That your students will know that Christians can serve God in many occupations, as Priscilla and Aquila did in their job.

Memory Verse

This quarter, I Timothy 1:12-16 and II Corinthians 11:24-28; this week, II Corinthians 11:25 - “Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea.”

Lesson Background

Today’s lesson focuses on Priscilla (the name is the diminutive of Prisca) and Aquila (meaning “eagle”), Jewish believers who had been forced out of Rome by the edict of Claudius in approximately 50 A.D. Paul met Aquila, a native of Pontus, and his wife as the apostle was preaching in Corinth, a city infamous for its wickedness. Because they were tentmakers (the word can also mean generally any leather-worker) as he was, Paul stayed and worked with them. Tents were made of leather or goat’s hair cloth, the latter a well-known product of Paul’s home region. After staying in Corinth for more than a year and a half, Paul headed home, traveling with Priscilla and Aquila as far as Ephesus. There Priscilla and Aquila explained the way of God more adequately to a man named Apollos, who later was greatly used by the Lord in Achaia (Greece). Priscilla and Aquila were not professional Christian workers, but God blessed the ministry carried out in their day-to-day lives. They even were used to save Paul’s life (Romans 16:3). May God use us mightily in whatever occupation He has placed us.

Knowledge Objectives - To know that God called tentmakers Priscilla and her husband Aquila to be His servants; that they traveled with Paul from Corinth to Ephesus and worked with him, and that they told Apollos about God; also to know that Christians can serve God in different occupations.

Behavioral Objectives - By God's grace, in whatever is done, to do all to the glory of God.

Lesson Procedure

Today's lesson departs somewhat from our usual procedure, for rather than examining one Bible passage (the main concepts presented in Acts 18 being rather repetitive of others we have studied and will study this quarter), we will concentrate on what we can learn from several characters who appear in this and other chapters of Scripture. Young children are often very interested in the grown-up world. They should learn that almost all occupations can glorify the Lord. Priscilla and Aquila made tents while Apollos preached, but both served the Lord (see I Corinthians 12:4-6, although the passage refers to spiritual gifts rather than employment). They also need to know that they are not too young or unimportant to begin honoring God now (this concept will be covered further in Lesson 10 of this quarter). Diligence in one's schoolwork can be just as important as faithfulness on the job. The significant thing is that all be done to the glory of God (I Corinthians 10:31).

MAP STUDY

Briefly review the events of Paul's second missionary journey and have your children finish charting the journey on their maps. The following stops on the second half of Paul's trip (i.e., beginning with last week's lesson in Philippi) should be noted:

Amphipolis and Apollonia (passed through) ➔ Thessalonica (riot at Jason's house) ➔ Berea (people studied the Scriptures) ➔ Athens ➔ Corinth ➔ Cenchrea ➔* Ephesus ➔* Caesarea ➔ Antioch.

* - traveled by ship

BIBLE STORY

Read **Acts 18:1-4, 18-28** and discuss how different people can serve the Lord in different ways, and the importance of Christian friendships such as that between Paul and Aquila and Priscilla. Also read **Romans 16:3, I Corinthians 16:19** and **II Timothy 4:19** if desired.

Discuss how Christians can honor God in different vocations generally (e.g., by being honest, working hard) and specifically (e.g., a farmer taking care of the soil to prevent erosion even though it would be cheaper to use big machines that do not do this). You may wish to use the rhymes below as a guessing game to discuss different occupations in which Christians could serve the Lord (you may make up your own rhymes or have your children do so, too).

I listen to your heart and chest
And tell you to get lots of rest;
I help to make sick people well,
Who am I, now can you tell?

(Doctor)

Houses small and buildings tall,
Even shops, I clean them all.
Perhaps I'll wash a school or two,
I know who I am, do you?

(Cleaning person, janitor)

Reading, writing, science, math,
To learning I will show the path;
Check your homework, grade your test,
Who am I? What answer's best?

(Teacher)

Clean the windshield, check the oil,
With cars and trucks I daily toil;
Pump up the tires, look under the hood,
You'll know who I am if your guessing's good.

(Gas station attendant)

Appliances, shoes, and toys,
Clothes for grown-ups, girls, or boys;
If such things you'd like to buy,
I will help you, who am I?

(Salesperson)

Violin, trumpet, drum,
Piano, flute, guitar to strum,
Playing low or way up high,
Can you guess, who am I?

(Musician)

Drive a backhoe, haul that load,
Lay some pipe, fix the road,
Rivet those girders, use that drill,
Guess who I am; I think you will.

(Construction worker)

ACTIVITY

What is a missionary? If Priscilla and Aquila honored God sewing tents and Christians can serve the Lord in many different occupations, what is a “missionary”? Perhaps the best definition is a person who brings the Gospel to people of a culture different than his own, usually in word as well as deed, or in direct support of those who do so. Have your children think of different jobs missionaries could do (e.g., translate the Bible, evangelize, teach, be a doctor or nurse, pilot, mechanic, photographer, secretary, artist, radio/T.V. worker). Perhaps your class could make a bulletin board illustrating missions. Have each child in your class act out a missionary job (or occupation in general) while the other students guess what he is pretending to be.

SONGS

“Except the Lord Build” (Psalm 127:1); “God That Madest Earth” (*Trinity Hymnal*, #405).

Take Home Activity

Occupations Booklet - Have your students draw pictures of people serving God in different occupations. Staple or tie the pictures together to form a booklet. Have your children print I Corinthians 10:31 on the cover of the booklet.

BIBLE PASSAGE - LESSON FOCUS

Acts 18:1-4, 18-28 - Christians can serve God in many occupations, as Priscilla and Aquila did in their job.

MEMORY VERSE

This quarter, I Timothy 1:12-16 and II Corinthians 11:24-28; this week, II Corinthians 11:25 - “Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea.”

SUGGESTED PROJECTS

1. Help your child learn about different occupations. Your public library probably has many books on this subject, some of which your child should be able to read himself.
2. If possible, take your child to work with you one day and show him the different things you do. He would probably be thrilled to sharpen pencils, try out a computer, help stock shelves, or do whatever he can to help you. If it is not practical to take him to work, at least explain to him what you do all day and, if you are a Christian, how you view your job as a place of service to God.
3. Discuss with your child how a Christian can serve God in his occupation. Think of specific areas in which he can show honesty (e.g., not taking home company supplies unless this is an expected fringe benefit of his job, not taking more time than allotted for lunch breaks), diligence, and other Christian qualities. How can these characteristics be applied in your child's school life? How can a Christian best witness for His Lord on the job or in school?
4. Do one or more activities from the special Missions Home Helps page.
5. Sing songs such as: “Except the Lord Build” (Psalm 127:1); “God That Madest Earth” (*Trinity Hymnal*, #405).

SUGGESTED PARENTAL READING

Scripture - Acts 17, 18, 19:1-22; Romans 16:3; I Corinthians 10:31; 12:4-6; 16:19; II Timothy 4:19; II Thessalonians 3:6-13; I Timothy 5:17-20; I and II Thessalonians; I and II Corinthians.

A RIOT IN EPHEBUS

Acts 19

Lesson Aim

That your students will know that we should worship the true and living God, not powerless idols.

Memory Verse

This quarter, I Timothy 1:12-16 and II Corinthians 11:24-28; this week, II Corinthians 11:26 - “I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false brothers.”

Lesson Background

Ephesus, located at the mouth of the Cayster river on an important trade route inland, was the main city in the Roman province of Asia. It was a “free city” with its own senate and civic assembly. Ephesus boasted a theater, capable of seating 25,000 people, and the temple of Artemis, which was considered one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. The temple apparently contained a meteorite resembling the female figure that was worshiped as a mother-earth/nature goddess, rather than Artemis, the young huntress of traditional Greek mythology.

When people become Christians, their lifestyles affect those around them, often in unexpected ways. When first-century Christians stopped worshiping idols, those who provided the sacrificial animals, those who grew the fodder for those animals, the makers of religious paraphernalia, as well as the employees of the pagan temples, found their livelihood suffering. Are we willing to stand for Christ even if it means economic loss?

A silversmith in Ephesus named Demetrius wanted to put a stop to anything that was so bad for business and gathered his fellow craftsmen together for this purpose. The trade guilds of the time were more social organizations divided along occupational lines than trade unions, and were many and diverse, involving such groups as bankers, doctors, architects, metal workers, barbers, and pastry cooks. Demetrius informed the workers that not only would their business be hurt, but that the temple to Artemis and the goddess herself would be discredited by the Christian witness. “When they heard this, they were furious and began shouting ‘Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!’ Soon the whole city was in an uproar. The people seized Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul’s traveling companions from Macedonia [the same men as in Acts 20:4?], and rushed as one man into the theater” (Acts 19:28-29).

Most of the confused assembly did not even know why they were there. The Jews (the large Jewish population enjoyed special privileges in Ephesus) pushed Alexander forward to speak, probably to argue that they had nothing to do with Paul’s activities. Alexander was unable to make a defense, however, because when the mob heard he was a Jew, they shouted in unison for two hours “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians.” Finally, the town clerk quieted the crowd. This man was perhaps the most important official in Ephesus. He published the decrees of the civic assembly that met thrice monthly and acted as a liaison between the assembly and the Roman provincial administration. He pointed out that Paul and his companions had not robbed temples nor blasphemed their goddess. Paul had proclaimed Christ rather than spending his time disparaging false religions. Could the same be said about us? The town clerk went on to say that there were proper procedures, courts and proconsuls to whom they could bring their grievances (actually an area had only one proconsul at a time, but scholars assume this refers to Helius and Celer, officials responsible for the emperor’s private affairs, who were left temporarily in charge after the poisoning of proconsul Marcus Junius Silanus, great grandson of Augustus Caesar); the craftsmen should follow the due process of law, for their actions that day could be considered riotous (and such a charge could bring a severe penalty from the Roman administration). We, too, should obey the law unless we are ordered to do something that is contrary to God’s law.

Today the worship of Artemis has largely been replaced (although pantheistic nature worship is on the rise) by people giving homage to idols such as fame, money, and pleasure. Christianity angers worshippers of modern as well as ancient idols, but the Lord is more powerful than any false gods and can protect His children from the idol worshippers’ wrath. May we honor God in all we do.

Knowledge Objectives - To know that, because Christians were causing him to lose business, Demetrius the silversmith stirred up his fellow-craftsmen and other citizens of Ephesus against Paul and his companions, seizing Gaius and Aristarchus and bringing them into the theater where a riot started; that when Alexander tried to speak, the crowd shouted “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians” for two hours; and that the town clerk finally quieted the group and sent them home.

Behavioral Objectives - By God’s grace, to worship Him, not powerless idols.

Lesson Procedure

Introduction - Review last week’s lesson, pointing out that trouble is practically inevitable when Christianity comes into conflict with false religions and Satanic practices. Ask why this is so. Tell your students that today’s story relates an incident from Paul’s third missionary journey in which difficulties again arose because of the Gospel.

BIBLE STORY

Read **Acts 19:23-41** and discuss, emphasizing God's power over idols. Ask what sorts of false gods people might worship today. Is there anything your students regard as more important than God in their lives? Also bring out the fact that faithfulness to Christ can have economic consequences and can affect others. Be sure your children understand all the terms in the story, such as who Artemis was and what an ancient theater looked like.

MAP STUDY

Have your children chart out Paul's third missionary journey using a different color felt-tip pen than they did for the first and second missionary journeys, drawing lines between the following cities and regions (regions are in parentheses):

Antioch ➔ (Galatia and Phrygia) ➔ Ephesus (riot) ➔ (Macedonia) ➔ (Greece) ➔ (Macedonia) ➔ Philippi ➔* Troas (Eutychus raised from the dead) ➔ Assos ➔* Mitylene ➔* Chios ➔* Samos ➔* Miletus (farewell to the Ephesian elders) ➔* Cos ➔* Rhodes ➔* Patara ➔* (past the south of Cyprus) ➔* Tyre (Paul warned not to go to Jerusalem) ➔* Ptolemais ➔* Caesarea (Philip and Agabus) ➔ Jerusalem.

* - indicates travel by ship

DRAMA

"Idol in a Box" - You or your students should dramatize this using puppets. Duplicate copies for the actors and return these and the master copy to the teacher's manual for future years.

SONGS

"Only Elohim" and "Just One God is He" (*Sir Oliver's Song*; Candle/Birdwing); "Jesus, Name Above All Names."

Take Home Activity

Letter Holder - Paul wrote letters to churches and individual Christians he met on his missionary journeys to give them further instructions and encourage them in the faith. We can also tell people about Christ in letters we write. Have each of your children write a letter to a friend telling him about Jesus and what he has been learning in Sunday School.

IDOL IN A BOX

Characters: **Tim**, a Christian boy
 Harry, Tim's friend

Scene 1

Tim: "Hi, Harry, you want to come over my house and play checkers or something?"

Harry: "Naw, not now, I'm watching T.V."

Tim: "O.K., see ya later."

Scene 2

Tim: "Hi, can you come out now? The guys are starting up a baseball game and we could use a good outfielder."

Harry: "No way. *Gary and the Space Giants* just came on. I can't miss that."

Tim: "Don't you ever do anything besides watch television?"

Harry: "Shh! You're spoiling the show. It's getting to the exciting part. See, Gary's hiding in the rocket, and this space giant comes over and. . ."

Tim: "Never mind. I've gotta go. The guys are waiting for me to start the game. See you tomorrow."

Scene 3

Tim: "Hey, Harry. You're still in your pajamas. Are you feeling sick?"

Harry: "Uh, uh. I'm not going to Sunday School. There's a new show on after these cartoons. It's supposed to be real funny and I'm gonna watch it."

Tim: "Would you turn that thing off a minute so I can talk to you?"

Harry: "Huh? Sure, O.K. What do you want?"

Tim: "All you ever do anymore is watch that stupid box. You know what television's become to you? An idol. You know, like we learned in Sunday School. People make statues of wood or metal and pray to them. They think the idols will make them happy and they even bring gifts to them. Well, you'd think that was a pretty dumb thing to do, but you seem to think that T.V.'s the greatest thing around and give it all your time and all. T.V.'s O.K. to watch sometimes, but not when you make it an idol and more important than God."

Harry: "Well, maybe you're right. I'll think about it. It's too late now to get ready, but maybe next week I can go with you to Sunday School."

Tim : "Good. I hope you will. Bye."

Questions:

- What is an idol? What was Harry's idol? Do you have any idols?
- How did Paul and Tim stand up for God's way against idols?

BIBLE PASSAGE - LESSON FOCUS

Acts 19:23-41 - We should worship the true and living God, not powerless idols.

MEMORY VERSE

This quarter, I Timothy 1:12-16 and II Corinthians 11:24-28; this week, II Corinthians 11:26 - "I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false brethren."

SUGGESTED PROJECTS

1. God's Word makes it clear that we must worship Him, not images made of wood or stone (Exodus 20:1-6). You would probably not consider bowing down before a tree or a statue, but other things, actually anything we regard as more important than God, anything we trust in more than Him, anything we give an inordinate amount of time or money to, is an idol. With your family, think of things that might become idols to you and discuss how you can place God first in your lives.
2. Read Acts 19:23-41 and discuss with your family the dangers of mob rule. Are the members of your family ever tempted to "follow the crowd" instead of doing what is right? Discuss. How might you help bring calm to a potentially explosive situation? Pray for wisdom to know whether or not groups of people you are involved with are following the best course of action. Pray that God will give you the courage to follow Him.
3. If the record *Sir Oliver's Song* (Candle/Sparrow) is available to you, listen to "Only Elohim" and "Just One God is He" as a family. Sing along, too.
4. Do a project from the special Missions Home Helps page.
5. Sing songs such as "Jesus, Name Above All Names."

SUGGESTED PARENTAL READING

Scripture - Acts 19:1-23:11; Exodus 20:1-6; Isaiah 44:6-20; 46:1-10.

PAUL IN JAIL

Acts 23:12-22

Lesson Aim

That your students will realize that, like Paul's nephew, they can serve God.

Memory Verse

This quarter, I Timothy 1:12-16 and II Corinthians 11:24-28; this week, II Corinthians 11:27 - "I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked."

Lesson Background

When Paul returned to Jerusalem after his third missionary journey, he found trouble awaiting him (see Acts 21:27-23:11). A group of Jews from Asia, recognizing Paul, stirred up a crowd, pulled Paul from the Temple where he was worshiping the Lord, and tried to kill him. The commander of a Roman garrison rescued Paul and arrested him as the apparent cause of the riot. Paul, asking and receiving permission to do so, preached to the crowd before being taken to the soldiers' barracks, probably the Antonia Fortress. The commander, Claudius Lysias, ordered Paul to be flogged, but when a centurion told him that Paul was a Roman citizen, he relented. The next day Claudius had Paul brought before the Sanhedrin to determine the exact nature of their charges against him. In the Sanhedrin, a great dispute broke out between the Pharisees and Sadducees about Paul, and the commander, afraid that Paul would be torn to pieces by them, ordered the troops to take him away by force and bring him into the barracks. "The following night the Lord stood near Paul and said, 'Take courage! As you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome'" (Acts 23:11).

“The next morning the Jews formed a conspiracy and bound themselves with an oath not to eat or drink until they had killed Paul” (Acts 23:12). They asked the chief priests and elders to request the commander to return Paul to the Sanhedrin on the pretext of questioning him further so that the conspirators could ambush Paul and kill him. The radical vow and plot (although the Mishnah made provision for breaking oaths under certain circumstances), with its almost certain attendant loss of life due to the heavy guard around Paul, point out the Jews’ fanatical devotion to their cause. Do we witness for Christ with such zeal (although not, of course, such methods)?

The conspirators’ plot was doomed to failure, for God wanted Paul to proclaim Christ in Rome as well as Jerusalem. Paul’s nephew heard about (or overheard) the plan to kill his uncle and was able to warn him. Roman citizens were allowed to receive visitors in prison (although Paul’s enemies would have had difficulty gaining entrance), and the positive impression Paul made on his captors, his Roman citizenship, and the urgency of the request must have been sufficient motivation for the centurion to bring Paul’s nephew to Claudius. There has been much speculation about Paul’s relationship to his family, such as whether his sister sided with Paul against their probably wealthy Jewish/Roman parents in supposed opposition to Paul’s conversion. Did Paul’s sister approve of her son’s actions, or was he perhaps studying in Jerusalem away from his family? How old was Paul’s nephew (the commander’s attitude toward him indicates some degree of youth)? Such considerations are fruitless, if interesting. The important thing to recognize is the boy’s determination to do what was right in spite of danger. May we do likewise. In response to Paul’s nephew’s warning, and also because he lacked the authority to deal with provincial prisoners once he had restored public order, Claudius Lysias had Paul transferred under heavy guard (necessary because of the explosive political situation) to prison in Caesarea under Felix’ jurisdiction.

Knowledge Objectives - To know that Paul was arrested in Jerusalem because a group of Jews started a riot and tried to kill him; that a group of more than forty men took an oath not to eat or drink until they had killed Paul, and they plotted to do so by asking the commander of the Roman garrison, Claudius Lysias, to send Paul to the Sanhedrin on the pretext of learning more about him, for they planned to ambush him on the way; to know that Paul’s nephew learned about this plot, and warned Paul and Claudius, who then sent Paul to Felix in Caesarea under heavy guard.

Behavioral Objectives - By God’s grace, to do what is right in spite of opposition or danger.

Lesson Procedure

Introduction - Summarize the background of today’s Scripture passage for your students (Acts 21:27-23:11). Then ask and discuss whether or not children can live for God. Ask them if they can think of any scriptural examples of children who served the Lord (e.g., Samuel and David as boys, the lad who gave Christ the loaves and fish).

BIBLE STORY

Read and discuss **Acts 23:12-22**, emphasizing the importance of obeying God, helping others, and doing what is right in spite of danger or opposition. Have your students think of circumstances in their lives to which this lesson could be applied.

MAP STUDY

Using a different color felt-tipped marker than they used for Paul's three missionary journeys, have your students draw a line from Jerusalem to Caesarea. Have any students who have not finished charting Paul's three missionary journeys do so at this time.

STORY (optional)

Read a story about a child doing what is right or helping someone in spite of opposition or danger, or have your students each write such a story.

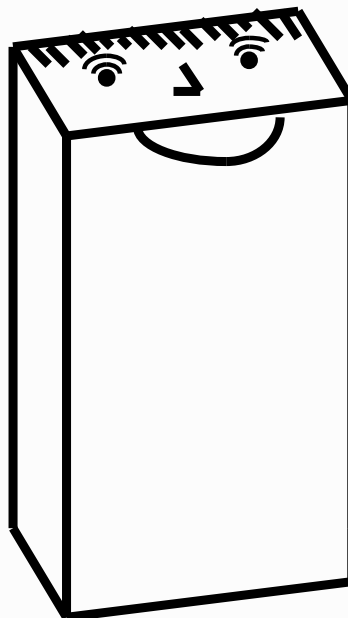
SONGS

"A New Commandment" (John 13:34); "Obey My Voice" (Jeremiah 7:23); "Not By Might" (Zechariah 4:6); "Let God Arise" (Psalm 68:1); "The Weapons of Our Warfare" (II Corinthians 10:4); "Only a Boy Named David"; "Can a Little Child Like Me" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #636); "Jesus Bids Us Shine" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #592); "Trust and Obey" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #672); "A Mighty Fortress" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #92).

Take Home Activity

Puppet - Have your students make a Paul and/or Paul's nephew puppet from cloth following the instructions on the Home Helps paper Year II, Quarter 3, Lesson 1, or from a paper lunch bag as follows:

Have your children draw a face on the bottom of the lunch bag or draw, cut out, and glue on features from construction paper. The place where the bottom of the bag can fold against the side of the bag serves as the puppet's mouth. Your children can glue yarn or fringed construction paper (have them cut snips next to each other about one millimeter apart in a strip of paper) to the paper bag for the puppet's hair. Have your children use their puppets to dramatize today's story.



BIBLE PASSAGE - LESSON FOCUS

Acts 23:12-22 - Like Paul's nephew, we can serve God.

MEMORY VERSE

This quarter, I Timothy 1:12-16 and II Corinthians 11:24-28; this week, II Corinthians 11:27- "I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked."

SUGGESTED PROJECTS

1. Dramatize today's Bible story and discuss how the different characters probably felt and why they acted as they did. What motivates your actions?
2. Read and discuss a book in which a character bravely does what is right in spite of consequences or risks his life to help another, as did Paul's nephew. Emphasize that God can use children as well as adults to glorify Him.
3. God protected Paul because He wanted him to witness for Christ in Rome. Discuss the fact that God takes care of His children.
4. Read and discuss Acts 21:27-23:11 and Acts 23:23-35.
5. A group of men took an oath not to eat or drink until they had killed Paul. Find out what the Bible says about taking oaths (see Matthew 5:33-37; James 4:13-17; Exodus 20:7; Deuteronomy 5:11).
6. Do one or more activities from the Missions Home Helps page.
7. Sing songs such as: "A New Commandment" (John 13:34); "Obey My Voice" (Jeremiah 7:23); "Not By Might" (Zechariah 4:6); "Let God Arise" (Psalm 68:1); "The Weapons of Our Warfare" (II Corinthians 10:4); "Only a Boy Named David"; "Can a Little Child Like Me" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #636); "Jesus Bids Us Shine" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #592); "Trust and Obey" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #672); "A Mighty Fortress" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #92).

SUGGESTED PARENTAL READING

Scripture - Acts 21:27-23:11; Acts 23:23-35; Matthew 5:33-37; James 4:13-17; Exodus 20:7; Deuteronomy 5:11.

PAUL'S TRIALS

Acts 24-26

Lesson Aim

That your students will know that we should boldly witness for Christ, as Paul did before Felix, Festus, and Agrippa.

Memory Verse

This quarter, I Timothy 1:12-15 and II Corinthians 11:24-18; this week, II Corinthians 11:28 - “Besides everything else I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches.”

Lesson Background

God takes care of His children even though they may have to endure many trials. He told Paul to “take courage” (Acts 23:11), for he would testify in Rome about the Lord as he had in Jerusalem. This must have encouraged Paul as he sat year after year in prison, wondering what would happen to him.

Five days after his arrival in Caesarea, having been sent there under arrest from Jerusalem by Claudius Lysias, Paul stood trial before Felix (whom Josephus and Tacitus note to have been a ferocious ruler) as charges were brought against him by the high priest Ananias and a lawyer named Tertullus. Tertullus greeted Felix with hollow flattery and proceeded to present three accusations against Paul: first, that he was a pest fomenting Jewish uprisings throughout the world; second, that he was a ringleader of the sect called the Nazarenes; and lastly, that he tried to desecrate the Temple (Tertullus probably charged that Paul merely attempted to desecrate the Temple, because the fact that Paul had not done this in actuality would be easy to prove). Paul calmly denied Tertullus' charges, except for admitting that he was indeed a follower of the Way, which the Jews called a sect. He gave specific facts about his situation, contrary to Tertullus' generalities, pointing out that his worship was not illegal, nor an aberration of Judaism. Paul explained that he was innocent; he had merely been bringing a gift for the poor in Jerusalem. What is more,

his accusers, the Jews from Asia, had failed to show up at his trial (proof that they did not have any evidence to convict him).

Felix adjourned the proceedings and ordered a centurion to keep Paul under guard. Several days later, Felix returned with Drusilla, his third wife and youngest daughter of Herod Agrippa I, and listened to Paul speak about faith in Christ. “As Paul discoursed on righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and said ‘That’s enough for now’” (Acts 24:25). The Gospel is not an abstract discourse, but has personal applicability and will often anger an individual when he first realizes its implications. Felix talked frequently with Paul over the next two years, hoping Paul would offer him a bribe to be released from prison. Paul, of course, refused to do this, and when Felix was recalled from his office (because he had intervened in Jewish/Gentile strife in Caesarea, leading to the shedding of the blood of Jewish leaders) and was succeeded by Porcius Festus, he left Paul in prison as a favor to the Jews.

Porcius Festus also wished to gain the good will of the Jews at the beginning of his administration, and so agreed to have Paul tried in Jerusalem, since that was where his alleged crime had been perpetrated. Paul realized that if Porcius Festus made one concession to the Jews, more could follow. More significantly, he recognized the dangers such a journey would entail and appealed his case to the emperor. It might seem strange that Paul would seek justice at the hands of such an iniquitous tyrant as Nero, but, although his deplorable personal moral character had been evident from his youngest days, Nero’s public administration from A.D. 54 to 62 was highly regarded, largely due to the influence of his tutor, Seneca, and Afranius Burrus, prefect of the Praetorian guard. Even had Paul realized Nero’s perfidy, he may still have appealed to the emperor because of the danger from the Jews and the Lord’s word that Paul must witness for Him in Rome.

Porcius Festus willingly relinquished the disagreeable task of dealing with Paul (Acts 25:12), but realized that he ought to have some concrete facts to send along in his report to Rome. Festus discussed his difficulty with his guest Herod Agrippa II, who told his host that he would like to listen to what the prisoner had to say. “The next day Agrippa and [his sister] Bernice came with great pomp and entered the audience room with the high ranking officers and leading men of the city” (Acts 25:24). These V.I.P.s would have been astounded at history’s (to say nothing of God’s) assessment of their lives and that of the prisoner who stood before them. Paul then began his defense, telling the assembly how Christ had saved him. He concluded by saying that he prayed that Agrippa and all those listening would become Christians. King Agrippa, Festus, Bernice, and those sitting with them left the room discussing Paul’s case. “Agrippa said to Festus ‘This man could have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar’” (Acts 26:32). We can imagine the frustration Paul could have felt had he heard Agrippa’s statement, but Paul knew his life was in the hands of God, who had a purpose in all He was doing in Paul’s life. May we trust God to protect and guide us and help us boldly witness for Him as Paul did.

Knowledge Objectives - To know the basic events of Paul’s defense before Felix, Festus, and Agrippa as recorded in Acts 24-26, namely that Ananias and Tertullus brought charges before Felix in Caesarea that Paul had stirred up riots, was a Christian leader, and tried to desecrate the Temple; that Felix refused to render a verdict in the case, but frequently sent for Paul and listened to him speak about Christ; that two years later Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus who, as a favor to the Jews, asked if Paul were willing to go to Jerusalem to be tried, but Paul appealed to have his case tried by Caesar; that Porcius Festus had his guests Herod Agrippa II and his sister Bernice listen to Paul in order to determine what to write in his report to Rome; and that Paul boldly witnessed to Christ and told them the story of his conversion.

Behavioral Objectives - By God’s grace, to witness boldly for Christ.

Lesson Procedure

Introduction - Using a question-and-answer format, review last week's Bible story of Paul's arrest in Jerusalem (Acts 23).

BIBLE STORY

Tell **Acts 24-26** in your own words or use the version below (today's Scripture passage is probably too long to read to a class of first and second graders). Explain to your children who Caesar was, how long Paul was in prison, the meaning of the charge that Paul desecrated the Temple, and any other concepts necessary to understanding the passage with which you think they might be unfamiliar. Some children may not even know what a trial and judge are, so it would be best to explain this as well. After telling the story, discuss the importance of witnessing for Christ and how Paul was faithful in so doing.

ACTS 24-26 - RETOLD

Five days after Paul was arrested, Ananias the high priest and Tertullus, a lawyer, came down and brought charges against Paul before the governor, whose name was Felix. First Tertullus tried to get Felix to like him by saying what a wonderful ruler he was, even though this was not true. Then Tertullus accused Paul of starting riots among the Jews all over the world, of being a leader of the Christians (whom he called Nazarenes), and of desecrating the Temple, which means doing something disrespectful to it. Paul said that these charges were not true and could not be proved except that, yes, he was a Christian. Paul said that he believed in the Law and the Prophets just as the Jews said they did, and had been in the Temple bringing gifts for the poor. Felix said he would decide Paul's case later; several days later he came with his wife Drusilla, sent for Paul, and listened to him as he spoke about faith in Christ. As Paul talked about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix became afraid and sent Paul away, but he sent for him again many times and talked to him because Felix hoped Paul would give him some money to let him out of prison. Paul would not do this, so Felix kept him in prison for two years and left him there as a favor to the Jews when a man named Porcius Festus took over his job.

The Jews went to the new governor and asked that Paul be brought to trial in Jerusalem instead of Caesarea, because they planned to ambush him along the way, as they had plotted two years before when he was in Jerusalem. Festus was willing to do this, but Paul said no, he should be tried right where he was, and if not he was going to appeal to Caesar. Caesar was the emperor, that is, a kind of king over the whole Roman world. As a Roman citizen, if Paul did not think the less important rulers such as Felix and Festus were being fair to him, he could ask Caesar to judge his case. Festus agreed to send Paul to Caesar.

Festus, however, thought that it would be a good idea to have something definite to write to Rome about why Paul was a prisoner, so he discussed the case with his guest, King Herod Agrippa II. Agrippa said he would like to hear Paul himself, so the next day Festus, Agrippa, his sister Bernice, and high-ranking officers and leading men of the city came to hear what Paul had to say. Paul then told these people how Christ had saved him.

[At this point, either read Acts 26 to your children or ask them to tell you the story of Paul's conversion as studied in Lesson 1; be sure they include all the important facts; perhaps a child would like to pretend to be Paul and tell his story before your other students, who could play the parts of Porcius Festus, Agrippa, Bernice, and the other guests. End by your reading Acts 26:24-32.]

REVIEW (optional)

Review today's and last week's Bible stories by asking your students brief "Who Am I?" riddles about characters involved, including Paul, Claudius Lysias, Felix, Drusilla, Porcius Festus, Herod Agrippa II, Bernice, and Caesar.

DRAMA

1. Role-play witnessing for Christ before authorities as suggested in Home Helps activity 1 for this week (optional).

2. **"Standing for Christ"** - Dramatize this play with puppets, if possible. Before you begin, explain the term "evolution" to those children who may be unfamiliar with it. Duplicate the master play copy for the actors and replace in the teacher's manual for use in future years.

SONGS

"Let God Arise" (Psalm 68:1); "Not By Might" (Zechariah 4:6); "The Weapons of Our Warfare" (II Corinthians 10:4); "King of Kings and Lord of Lords"; "A Mighty Fortress" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #92); "Jesus Bids Us Shine" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #592); "Stand Up For Jesus" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #571).

Take Home Activity

Mosaic Picture - Have your children sketch with pencil a simple drawing of Paul witnessing to Christ before Felix or Festus and Agrippa. Have them cut or rip construction paper into tiny (about 3 millimeters in length) pieces and glue them onto their picture mosaic fashion, that is, allowing some of the white background paper to show between the pieces that are glued down.

STANDING FOR CHRIST

Characters: **Tim**, a Christian boy
Mr. P., Tim's teacher

Mr. P.: "As you know, students, next Friday night is our school's special program for parents. Our class will do a presentation on evolution. Each of you will have a part and we will begin practicing for it tomorrow. That's all for today. Class dismissed."

Tim: "Mr. P.?"

Mr. P.: "Yes, Tim?"

Tim: "I can't be in the play for the parents."

Mr. P.: "Why not?"

Tim: "Well, you may have seen from my questions in class that I don't believe in evolution and I'd . . ."

Mr. P.: "It's not a matter of belief; evolution is a scientific fact."

Tim: "Well, sir, not all scientists agree with you. God says in the Bible that He created man in His own image. I really don't know enough about it to argue with you, but my Dad has some books you can borrow if you'd like to see what a Christian scientist thinks about it."

Mr. P.: "You think you can convince me about that religious stuff? I'll read the books if you want and show you all the mistakes. If you're going to be stubborn about next week's program, there's not much I can do about it. But you will have to do extra work while the other kids rehearse or I'll lower your grade. How about writing a report on 'the evidence of evolution'?"

Tim: "Thanks, Mr. P. I'll help with the other parts of the program if you want me to and that report should help me understand more about what I believe and what you think, too. Bye and thanks again."

Questions:

- Why didn't Tim want to be in the program for the parents?
- Was it easy for Tim to talk to his teacher? Why not? (Embarrassment; the teacher might have lowered his grade.)
- What was Tim's attitude toward Mr. P.?
- Did Tim suffer for being faithful to God?
- Why didn't Tim complain about the extra assignment he was given?
- What might have been the negative results if Tim had participated in the program? (e.g., God dishonored; Tim's fellowship with the Lord hurt; Tim's witness for Christ hurt.)
- What were the results of Tim's obedience?

BIBLE PASSAGE - LESSON FOCUS

Acts 24-26 - We should witness boldly for Christ, as Paul did before Felix, Festus, and Agrippa.

MEMORY VERSE

This quarter, I Timothy 1:12-16 and II Corinthians 11:24-28; this week, II Corinthians 11:28 - "Besides everything else I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches."

SUGGESTED PROJECTS

1. It is unlikely that you and your family will have to witness to Christ before governors and kings (Matthew 10:18), but there are those who do (pray for them!), and we should be prepared to do so. Role-play a drama in which one or more members of your family is on trial for his faith. Have different family members play judge, defendant, and prosecuting attorney. You may wish to accuse the "prisoner" of a specific crime, such as witnessing in a forbidden place, not just of being a Christian in general.
2. Proclaim Christ to relatives, neighbors, co-workers, employers or employees, and schoolmates. Discuss how you can do this in a friendly, non-threatening way, where if they are offended it will be by the message of the Gospel, not the way in which it is presented. How can you show the love of Christ to a non-Christian? Make specific plans to put the results of your discussion into practice. Pray that the Lord will work mightily as you witness for Him.
3. Do one or more activities from the special Missions Home Helps paper.
4. Sing song such as: "Let God Arise" (Psalm 68:1); "Not By Might" (Zechariah 4:6); "The Weapons of Our Warfare" (II Corinthians 10:4); "King of Kings and Lord of Lords"; "A Mighty Fortress" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #92); "Jesus Bids Us Shine" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #592); "Stand Up For Jesus" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #571).

SUGGESTED PARENTAL READING

Scripture - II Timothy 3:12; Matthew 10.

Study **history books** (e.g., Josephus), **encyclopedias**, or other **reference works** to learn more about the historical figures mentioned in Acts 24-26: Felix, Drusilla, Porcius Festus, Herod Agrippa II, Bernice, and Nero (Caesar at this time).

SHIPWRECK

Acts 27

Lesson Aim

That your students will realize that God is in control of the lives of His children.

Memory Verse

This quarter, I Timothy 1:12-16 and II Corinthians 11:24-28; this week, review II Corinthians 11:24-28.

Lesson Background

Acts 27 documents the greater part of Paul's journey to Rome, where he was to stand trial for his life before Caesar. Paul, under the custody of a centurion named Julius, and his companions, including Luke (note the "we" of verse 2 and following) and Aristarchus, boarded a ship from Adramyttium (a seaport of Mysia opposite Lesbos island), probably debarking from Caesarea. The next day, they landed at Sidon, where Julius allowed Paul to visit friends on shore so they might provide for his needs. From there they sailed to Myra in Lycia, passing to the lee of Cyprus (east and north) rather than to the south-west as Paul had on previous trips when returning to Jerusalem, because prevailing westerly winds made it difficult for ships to travel in that direction without using the coastal land breezes and western-flowing current. Since the Adramyttium ship was apparently going to continue its journey along the Asian coast, transportation to Italy had to be found on another ship. Myra was a chief port for ships carrying grain between Egypt and Rome, and these ships were given special consideration by the Roman government; Julius had no trouble securing passage for himself and his prisoners on an Alexandrian ship.

The ship made slow headway for many days until finally arriving with difficulty off the coast of Cnidus. From there the ship sailed to the lee of Crete (the east side) and eventually landed on the south side of Crete at Fair Havens. Here a dispute arose as to whether they should continue their journey. September 14 to November 11 was considered a dangerous season for sailing, and after this time navigation stopped for

the winter. Since the Fast or Day of Atonement had already past, Paul warned that to go on with the trip before spring would be disastrous. The Day of Atonement falls on the tenth day of Tishri, but since the Jews use a lunar calendar, this date varies from year to year. Most scholars date Paul's trip to Rome in A.D. 59 because the Day of Atonement occurred on the twenty-eighth of October that year, far later than in other years of this approximate time period. Be that as it may, Julius was far more ready to listen to the captain and owner of the ship than his prisoner, and since the majority viewed Fair Havens as an unsuitable place in which to winter, the company decided to set sail and try to reach Phoenix. We can see here the questionable value of majority rule and the importance of listening to the advice of a man of God.

The ship set sail for Phoenix, but a gentle south wind turned into a violent northeaster, forcing the vessel off course. The ship could not head into the wind, and so the sailors were forced to let it be driven along wherever it would be pushed by the wind and waves. In the lee of Cauda, an island twenty-three miles from Crete, they were able to make the lifeboat, which was normally towed behind the ship, secure and to strengthen the ship with rope to keep it from falling apart. Matters did not improve, however, and soon they began tossing unessential gear overboard to lighten the ship so it would ride higher in the water and not become swamped. When neither sun nor stars (by which the sailors navigated) appeared for several days, the people gave up all hope of being saved.

Paul then stood before the ship's company, reminded them that he had warned them this disaster would befall them if they left Fair Havens, and told them to keep up their courage, for he had been told by an angel of God that they would all survive. On the fourteenth night, they crossed the Adriatic Sea (which in ancient times referred to a far greater area than the body of water we now designate as such), and about midnight approached land. Some sailors attempted to escape the ship in the lifeboat, but Paul warned the centurion that if they did this the ship's company would perish. Just before dawn, Paul urged them all to eat, for they had not done so for fourteen days, probably because of seasickness, anxiety, and to ration food because much would have been destroyed by seawater leaking into the hold. After they had eaten, they lightened the ship by throwing the grain into the sea, and when daylight came, they cut the anchors and ran for shore. The ship struck a sandbar and ran aground, but the ship's company was able to swim ashore or float to safety by holding onto planks or pieces of the ship. These events probably occurred in what is today called Saint Paul's Bay by Malta.

The soldiers had desired to kill the prisoners before they left the ship (lest they escape and the soldiers forfeit their own lives for negligence in their duty), but Julius dissuaded them, for he wanted Paul kept alive. God protected His servant, for He had work for Paul to do. Paul honored the Lord by being calm and practical in the emergency situations he encountered. May we glorify God in crisis as Paul did.

Knowledge Objectives - To know that Paul, guarded by Julius the centurion, and with his companions Luke and Aristarchus, began a trip to Rome on an Adramyttian ship sailing past Cyprus and later, transferring to an Alexandrian ship in Myra, continued on to Crete amid great difficulties caused by weather; to know that Paul told the group that they should stay at Fair Havens in Crete because it was past the Day of Atonement, too late in the year for sailing, but that the centurion and ship's owner and captain tried to reach Phoenix; the ship encountered a fierce storm and finally ran aground on a sandbar near Malta, to which the ship's company swam or floated ashore; also to know some details of Paul's voyage to this point.

Behavioral Objectives - By God's grace, to act calmly and "be in control" in crisis situations, trusting God for deliverance, and to heed the advice of God's servants, not necessarily following the advice of the majority.

Lesson Procedure

Introduction - Set the stage for today's Bible story by describing sea travel in ancient times. If possible, show your children a picture of a Roman sailing vessel (see *Eerdmans Handbook to the Bible* or other reference work), describe what a ship looked like, its approximate size, that it used paddles for steering rather than a rudder, how it was navigated and was so much at the mercy of the wind and weather, and what traveling in such a vessel would have been like (e.g., crowded, uncomfortable). Using a toy boat in a tub of water, show how lightening a ship's cargo allows it to displace a smaller volume of water and float higher (if you prefer, demonstrate this last concept when you reach the appropriate place in the Bible story).

BIBLE STORY

Read **Acts 27** and discuss Paul's calm handling of an emergency and his wise advice, as well as God's protection of His servant. Compare this with Luke 8:22-25.

MAP STUDY

Review today's Bible story by having your students trace on their maps Paul's journey to Rome and discussing what happened at each place along the route. Have your students draw lines between locations dot-to-dot fashion using a different color felt-tipped pen than used for the three missionary journeys. Do this as a class; do not allow students to go ahead on their own, so you may review the Bible story at the same time.

DRAMA

Dramatize "Danger on the River" using puppets. Duplicate copies of the play for your readers and return them and the master to the teacher's manual for use in future years.

SONGS

"My Anchor Holds" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #617); "A Shelter in the Time of Storm" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #619).

Take Home Activity

Paul's Ship - Have your students make a model of Paul's ship. You will probably have to do much of the work at home yourself, but your students should at least be able to sand the wood and attach the mast and sail. You may have your students continue to work on this project next week if you wish to have them stain or paint their ships or add details such as paddles, a cabin, additional sails, and/or rigging.

Roman grain ships were approximately 140 by 36 feet with a large central mast supporting a large square sail and two much smaller triangular sails above it. There was also a square sail hung from a small mast, which jutted over the bow at an angle. The ship was steered by two paddles rather than a rudder.

Construct a simple ship as follows: Saw one end of a small piece of wood into a triangle shape. Saw an approximately 5-inch piece from a dowel rod (diameter approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ inch) or use a plastic drinking straw for the ship's mast. Drill a hole of the same diameter as the dowel rod partially through the center of the block of wood (the ship). Glue the mast to the ship. Cut a 4-inch square of paper for the sail. Punch a hole in the sail 2 inches from the side and $\frac{3}{4}$ inch from the top of the sail. Punch another hole 2 inches from the side and $\frac{3}{4}$ inch from the bottom of the sail. Paint or stain the ship, if desired. Insert the mast through the holes in the sail. Fashion other details for the ship, if desired.

DANGER ON THE RIVER

Characters: **Tim**, a Christian boy
Harry, Tim's friend
Oscar, another friend

Props: a raft, "water"

Oscar: "Boy, am I hot! This has been one long hike."

Tim: "I think that's water ahead!"

Harry: "Yeah, it's the river!"

Oscar: "Hey, look at this neat raft!"

Tim: "We'd better not touch it; perhaps it belongs to someone and. . ."

Oscar: "Aw, don't be an old stick in the mud. Anyone can see it hasn't been used in years."

Harry: "At least we can sit on it and cool our feet in the water."

Tim: "Well. . ."

Oscar: "Hey, it's even got a pole to push it with. Look at me; I'm Tom Sawyer."

Tim: "Look out!"

Harry: "Now you've done it; you've pushed us into the middle of the river. The current's got us and we're moving fast."

Oscar: "Yeah, isn't it great. This is the life."

Harry: "But I'm scared. I don't know how to swim. How will we get back?"

Oscar: "Who cares? Don't worry about it. We'll be all right."

Tim: "What's that noise?"

Harry: "Look! There are rapids ahead. What'll we do? We'll all be drowned."

Tim: "I think the first thing we'd better do is pray. Lord, you know we're in a mess and we really need your help. Please get us safely back to land. Thank you. Amen."

Oscar: "Let's try to swim for it."

Tim: "No, the current's too strong. We'd almost certainly be drowned then. See, the river narrows up ahead just before it gets to the rapids. Let's put the pole crosswise and the pressure of the river should wedge it against those rocks. We can let the raft go, hold on, and get to shore without ourselves getting swept down the river."

Oscar: "If the pole holds."

Harry: "Come on; it's our only chance!"

* * * * *

Oscar: "Made it. Thanks, Tim."

Tim: "That's O.K. I'm glad we got safely to shore, but don't thank me. It was God who helped us."

Questions:

- What did the boys find on the river?
- Do you think they should have played with the raft?
- Do you think Tim was afraid? (Yes.)
- How did Tim act in a scary situation? What did he do?
- Why do you think he could act calmly?
- Tell about a situation in which God could help you to be brave.
- Why did God take care of Paul and Tim?

BIBLE PASSAGE - LESSON FOCUS

Acts 27 - God is in control of His children's lives, as He was Paul's when he suffered shipwreck.

MEMORY VERSE

This quarter, I Timothy 1:12-16 and II Corinthians 11:24-28; this week, review II Corinthians 11:24-28.

SUGGESTED PROJECTS

1. Learn about ancient sailing ships and navigation. If possible, take a ride in a boat or visit a docked sailing ship.
2. Learn more about where Paul traveled. Using toy people and ships, pretend Paul and his companions are caught in a storm. If you live near a beach or pond, use sand or mud and water to make a map of the Mediterranean and trace Paul's journey to Rome with a toy ship.
3. Read about sea voyages both in the Bible and in literature.
4. Paul acted calmly in an emergency. How do you and your family act in crisis situations? Think of crisis situations that might arise and pray and plan how to act for God's glory in these situations.
5. Paul gave wise counsel contrary to the advice of the majority. Discuss times when it would be better for you to heed the wisdom of godly men rather than listening to the voice of the majority. Role play some of these situations. Would you stand, like Paul, against the majority for something you knew was right?
6. Do one or more activities from the special Missions Home Helps.
7. Sing songs such as: "My Anchor Holds" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #617); "A Shelter in the Time of Storm" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #619).

SUGGESTED PARENTAL READING

Scripture - Luke 8:22-25; Matthew 8:23-27; Mark 4:35-41.

PAUL ON MALTA

Acts 28:1-10

Lesson Aim

That your students will realize that God is sovereign and omnipotent as much today as when He protected Paul after a shipwreck and used Paul on Malta.

Memory Verse

Review **I Timothy 1:12-16** and **II Corinthians 11:24-28**.

Lesson Background

“Out of the frying pan into the fire.” Paul might have felt this expression apropos to his situation, for he survived shipwreck on the way to trial in Rome only to have a poisonous snake fasten itself to his arm! Acts 28 can teach us much about God’s omnipotence and sovereign control of His children’s lives, as well as their response in loving obedience to Him.

The ship on which Paul was travelling had run aground by the island of Malta (or Melita, the Canaanite word for “refuge”). The inhabitants, Phoenician descendants who still spoke a Punic dialect, welcomed the shipwrecked travelers and built a fire because it was raining and cold. Paul set about the task of gathering brushwood to feed the fire. Would we have been willing to help out with such a humble task, particularly after such a traumatic experience as Paul had endured? A snake in the brushwood, driven out by the heat, fastened itself on Paul’s hand. It was probably a viper, although scholars differ in their opinions as to its identity. The islanders jumped to the conclusion (do we tend to jump to conclusions?) that Paul was a murderer whom the goddess Justice had not allowed to escape. They changed their minds when Paul suffered no ill effects and decided that their visitor must be a god (cf. Paul at Lystra).

The Maltese' kindness and generosity in welcoming the travelers to the island was in turn rewarded by God's blessing, at least physically. Publius, the "first man" of the island, had a father who was sick in bed with fever and dysentery. He may have been suffering from Malta fever, an affliction endemic to the island and caused by a microorganism in goat's milk. "Paul went in to see the man and, after prayer, placed his hands on him and healed him. When this had happened the rest of the sick on the island came and were cured" (Acts 28:8-9). Three months later, Paul and his companions, their needs supplied by the Maltese, left the island on an Alexandrian ship and eventually reached Rome. May our lives, like Paul's, be under God's sovereign control and be used for His glory.

Knowledge Objectives - To know that Paul and his shipwrecked companions sought refuge on the island of Malta, where the inhabitants showed them unusual hospitality; that as Paul was gathering brushwood for the fire, a snake fastened on his hand, but he suffered no ill effects; since he did not become sick as the islanders thought he would, they changed their assessment of Paul from thinking he was a murderer to believing he was god; that Paul prayed and God healed the father of Publius, the first man of the island, who had been suffering from fever and dysentery, and that hearing of this, many of the islanders came to be healed of their afflictions; also to know that God is omnipotent and sovereign.

Behavioral Objectives - By God's grace, to serve Him in love and obedience, doing kind, helpful things for others.

Lesson Procedure

Introduction - Briefly review last week's lesson using a question-and-answer format.

BIBLE STORY

Read **Acts 28:1-10** and discuss, emphasizing God's omnipotence and sovereignty and the Christian's response in love, obedience, and humble service to others. Use the background material to supplement your discussions.

MAP STUDY

Students should complete any unfinished work on their maps and take them home today.

SONGS

"Great is Thy Faithfulness" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #32); "A Mighty Fortress" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #92); "Let Us With a Gladsome Mind" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #33); "Obey My Voice" (Jeremiah 7:23); "A New Commandment" (John 13:34); "This is My Commandment" (John 15:12); "Beloved, Let Us Love One Another" (I John 4:7-8); "Jesus, Name Above All Names."

ACTIVITY

Bible Baseball - Use the Bible Baseball questions from the front of the teacher's manual to review the content of the quarter, if time permits.

STORY

GOD CARES

Characters: **Tim** - a Christian Boy
Harry - Tim's friend, also a Christian

Tim: "Hi, Harry, how are you doing?"

Harry: "Not too good, Tim. Remember, I have to get my tonsils out in the hospital next week."

Tim: "Well, that will be good. The operation should help so you don't sick get as often."

Harry: "But I'm scared. I've never been to a hospital before. I don't know what they're going to do to me. My doctor's real nice and my Mom says everything's going to be all right, but I'm still afraid."

Tim: "I guess it is a bit frightening. But God has promised to take care of His children. He said He'd never leave them. Remember when we were out on the river with that raft? We could have drowned in that rough water, but God took care of us then, didn't He?"

Harry: "I guess so."

Tim: "I know it's not easy to trust God. I'll pray that He will take care of you and help you not to be so afraid."

Harry: "Thanks, Tim. Knowing you love me helps me believe that God cares about me, too."

Tim: "Let's pray now and ask God to help you."

Harry: "Yes, that's a good idea."

Questions:

- Of what was Harry afraid?
- How did Tim comfort Harry?
- How does God help His people in difficult situations?

Take Home Activity

Worksheet - Do this together as a class. Provide rulers if possible.

Class Work

Paul on Malta

Match the people and events with places (more than one answer is possible).

Publius

Rome

Lydia

Jerusalem

Sergius Paulus

Philippi

jailer

Lystra

snake

Corinth

riot

Malta

council

Ephesus

lame man

Caesarea

Elymas

Aquila and Priscilla

Demetrius

Claudius Lysias

Nero

BIBLE PASSAGE - LESSON FOCUS

Acts 28:1-10 - God is sovereign and omnipotent today, as when He protected Paul after a shipwreck and used Paul on Malta.

MEMORY VERSE

Review **I Timothy 1:12-16** and **II Corinthians 11:24-28**.

SUGGESTED PROJECTS

1. Thank God for His sovereign control of your lives and His love, and ask Him to help you live serving Him and others in love and humility.
2. Review Paul's life and ministry. Have each family member name at least one thing he learned from this quarter's study of Paul's life.
3. Read at least a portion of Paul's epistles. Relate the events of Paul's life to what he wrote in the letters written at the time of these events.
4. Do one or more activities from the Missions Home Helps page.
5. Sing songs about God's providential care and/or our obedient response to His love such as: "Great is Thy Faithfulness" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #32); "A Mighty Fortress" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #92); "Let Us With a Gladsome Mind" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #33); "Obey My Voice" (Jeremiah 7:23); "A New Commandment" (John 13:34); "This is My Commandment" (John 15:12); "Beloved, Let Us Love One Another" (I John 4:7-8); "Jesus, Name Above All Names."

SUGGESTED PARENTAL READING

Scripture - Mark 16:14-18 (not in the most reliable early manuscripts); Philemon; Colossians; Ephesians; Philippians.