



Paul Before Rulers

Bible Passage: Acts 24-26

Main Point: Paul was willing to do hard things to share the gospel.

Key Passage: Philippians 1:6

Big Picture Question: What will happen for all Christians in the future? One day, all Christians will see Jesus in His glory and live with Him forever.

Leader Fuel

Paul was in custody in Caesarea, the capital of the Roman province of Judea. The Jewish leaders had brought serious charges against him, so Paul now stood before Felix, the governor. Felix listened to Paul's defense but delayed a ruling. He met with Paul off and on for two years. When his time as governor ended, Felix left Paul in prison because he did not want to upset the Jews. Festus succeeded Felix as governor. The Jews presented their accusations against Paul and asked Festus to bring him to Jerusalem. They hoped to ambush Paul as he traveled and kill him. But Festus invited Paul's accusers to make their case in Caesarea. When Festus heard Paul's case, he asked if Paul wanted to be tried in Jerusalem. Paul, knowing his rights as a Roman citizen, appealed to be heard by Caesar. Several days later, King Agrippa visited Festus and heard about Paul. He asked to listen to Paul's defense himself. Festus wasn't sure how he would justify his sending Paul to Caesar without substantiated charges, and he hoped this hearing would provide stronger evidence against Paul. Festus told Paul he was out of his mind, but they determined Paul could have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar. With these events, Paul was positioned to go to Rome, just as God had said he would. (See Acts 19:21; 23:11.) God had chosen Paul to take the gospel to Gentiles, kings, and the Israelites. (See Acts 9:15-16.) Paul was confident that Jesus has the power to save people from sin, and he was willing to do whatever it took to share the gospel. As you teach kids, prompt them to consider how Paul might have felt as he spoke before rulers and remained in custody for two years. Lead them to consider how God was at work to keep His promises.

Christ Connection: God had chosen Paul to take the gospel to Gentiles, kings, and the Israelites. (Acts 9:15-16) Paul met with people again and again to tell the good news about Jesus. He wanted everyone to believe that Jesus is Lord. Because Jesus has the power to save people from sin, Paul was willing to do whatever it took to share the gospel.

Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. Prompt kids to discuss a time when they got in trouble. **SAY • Usually when we get into trouble, it's because we did something wrong or unwise. Today, we'll learn about a time Paul was arrested even though he had not broken the law. How do you think Paul felt?**

Activity Page

Invite kids to complete the "Hear Ye, Hear Ye" activity page. Kids will number the pictures from one to five to indicate the oldest and newest ways to spread news. **SAY • Each of these pictures are different ways**



to communicate information to others. Today we're going to learn how Paul shared the good news about Jesus with others, even important leaders. Would you be courageous enough to share the gospel with the president?

Odd laws

Ask kids to decide if the following laws are real or fake.

- It's illegal to drive blindfolded in Alabama. (real)
- It's legal to ride a camel in Arizona. (fake)
- In Hawaii, it's illegal to place a coin in your ear. (real)
- You can't sell your vehicle on a Sunday in Michigan. (real)
- In Kentucky, it's illegal to chew gum and walk at the same time. (fake)

SAY • Sometimes laws may seem odd or outdated, but if you break them, you can get into trouble even if the law seems silly. Paul was arrested though he hadn't broken any laws. Today we'll learn more about what Paul did while in custody.

Large Group

Leaders, please sit with your children in the theater area as they learn, setting a good example by engaging yourself in the lesson as well.

Online: Bible Story Video on KidsLife YouTube Channel, Instagram

Key passage activity (5 minutes)

New verse! Write verse on dry erase board. Recite verse together as a table several times. Then begin erasing words to work on memory. **SAY • Paul seemed like the perfect Christian. He shared the gospel all the time! But even Paul was being made more like Jesus every single day. God had called Paul to salvation through Jesus' death and resurrection. The Holy Spirit was continuing the good work of the gospel in Paul's heart every day.**

Bible Story and Review

Distribute a Bible to each kid. Help them find Acts 24- 26. Show the group how to use the Table of Contents in the front of their Bible to find the page numbers of the books of the Bible. Remind the kids that Acts is in the New Testament right after the four Gospels. Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

1. Who had planned to kill Paul? (the Jews, Acts 23:15)



2. How often did Paul and Felix, the governor, meet to talk about faith? (many times for two years, Acts 24:27)
 3. Who did Paul tell Festus he wanted to see? (Caesar, the emperor of Rome; Acts 25:10)
 4. How was prison a blessing from God for Paul? Guide the kids to think about what Paul's enemies wanted to do to him. Remind the kids that as long as Paul was being held by the Romans, the Jewish religious leaders who hated him could not achieve their goal of killing Paul.
 5. Why was Paul willing to stay in prison when he hadn't broken the law? Direct kids to think about Paul's understanding of God's promises. Paul knew that God wanted him to go to Rome to share the gospel, and asking to speak with Caesar is one way Paul could do so. Paul also knew that the rewards of obeying God are worth giving up anything the world can offer us, such as wealth, comfort, or power.
 6. Have you done difficult things to share the gospel? Help kids think critically about their lives. Ensure they know that this is a safe place to talk about their feelings. Encourage all the kids who admit they haven't done anything difficult to share the gospel, and pray over the group that God will give them courage and opportunities to share.
- SAY • Paul was willing to do hard things to share the gospel. Paul knew that Jesus alone had the power to save people from sin. Paul trusted God's plan.**
-

What would you do?

Invite the kids to sit in a circle. Select a kid to start the game and hand her a ball. Instruct her to share one thing she wishes she didn't have to do, such as a chore or school assignment. She will pass the ball to the left and the next kid will share something he wishes he didn't have to do. When the ball reaches the kid who started the game, she will recall something another kid said they didn't want to do that she would rather do, then pass the ball to the left. Play until each kid has said which chore or task they would rather do instead of the one they suggested.

SAY • There are always things we wish we didn't have to. For every chore or assignment we don't want to do, there are many other things we'd rather do instead. Paul was willing to do hard things to share the gospel. Do you think Paul wanted to go to prison or stand in front of kings and rulers? He probably had a whole list of other things he would have rather done. But Paul's courage came from the Holy Spirit working in his life and from his trust in God to keep His promises.

Reflection and prayer

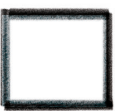
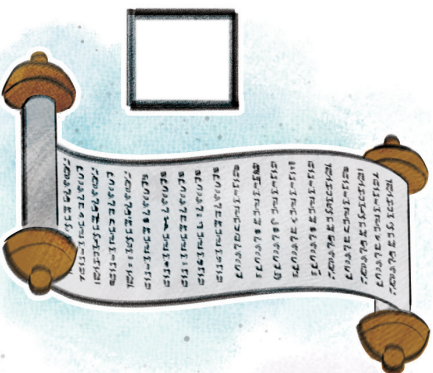
Distribute a sheet of paper to each child. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

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

Make sure to send the sheets home with kids alongside the activity page so that parents can see what their kids have been learning. If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page provided with this session. Pray for your group.

Hear Ye, Hear Ye

INSTRUCTIONS: Number each picture from the oldest ways to communicate to the newest.



Younger Kids Activity Pages Unit 35 • Session 1 Paul Before Rulers

BIBLE STORY SUMMARY:

- The Romans took Paul to Caesarea to keep him safe.
- Paul shared the gospel with the leaders who had him in prison.
- Paul asked to go to Rome so he could present his case to Caesar.
- Paul was willing to do hard things to share the gospel.

KEY PASSAGE: Philipians 1:6

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

- What will happen for all Christians in the future? One day, all Christians will see Jesus in His glory and live with Him forever.

FAMILY DISCUSSION STARTERS:

- Where could you go this week to share the gospel?
- Who could you share the gospel with this week?
- Why might that be difficult?

FAMILY ACTIVITY:

- Use costume jewelry and paper crowns to create king or queen outfits for your kids. Encourage your kids to wear the costumes and reenact the story of Paul sharing the gospel with rulers. Talk about who they could share the gospel with.



DOWNLOAD the
LIFEWAY KIDS APP

