

13. Paul Escapes (Acts 9:20-25)

“As for us, we can’t stop speaking about what we have seen and heard.” (Acts 4:20)



PLAN

Supplies

Deep Blue Resources: One Room Sunday School® Kit: CD-ROM | Leader Guide | Reproducible Kids’ Book | Resource Pak

Additional Deep Blue Resources:

CEB Deep Blue Kids Bible | Deep Blue Bible Storybook | Deep Blue Adventure DVD | Deep Blue Bible Dictionary

Basic Supplies: DVD player | CD player | Pencils | Crayons | Markers | Scissors | Tape | Paper lunch bags | Yarn | Single-hole punch | Resealable plastic bags | Spoons | Mural paper

Gather: Two laundry baskets | Fish-shaped crackers | Mini marshmallows | Cranberries | Chocolate candies | Nuts

Explore: Beach ball

Respond: World map

Bless: No additional supplies

Before You Teach

After his encounter with Jesus, Paul spent several days in Damascus with the disciples. The fact that he was received by the community was a sign that he had truly changed. Immediately he began preaching in the synagogue that Jesus was the Christ. He boldly declared that Jesus was the Messiah. The radical change in Paul was clearly a miracle.

But not all of the people believed that he had changed. Many still saw him as the cruel punisher of the church. His reputation was too strong for some people to accept the change. The Jewish leaders who were not followers of Jesus plotted to capture Saul and execute him. They set up an ambush by the city gate, the only way in or out of the city, and waited for Paul.

Paul found out about the plot to kill him, and shared it with the friends he had made in Damascus. Those friends located a window in the city wall. At night they put Paul in a large basket and passed the basket through the window. Then they lowered him to the ground outside the wall.

Paul left immediately and returned to Jerusalem, but he continued preaching in the synagogues. He took a strong stand and continued his ministry even when faced with persecution. God had chosen Paul to carry the good news about Jesus to the Gentiles, and Paul faithfully served God through the remainder of his life.

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GATHER

Greeting

Before class: Display the “Attendance Chart” (Resource Pak—pp. 2 and 23 or p. 3). Two different options for an attendance chart are given in the Resource Pak. Decide which is best for your class.

- Play the theme song, “All Are Welcome” (CD-ROM), as you welcome each child.
- Show the children where to place their offerings on the worship table.
- Have each child mark an attendance chart. For the “Community Attendance Chart,” the children can write their first names or initials on the building marked #13.

PRAY: Dear God, show us how you kept Paul safe so he could take the good news to the Gentiles; in Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.

ASK: Do you like going on rides at a park? What is your favorite ride at an amusement park? Have you ever been lowered down a wall in a basket?

What Did They Need? (Puzzle – Preschool)

Before class: Make a copy of Reproducible 13b for each preschool child.

SAY: Some people wanted to bully Paul. Paul’s friends helped him get away from the bullies. Look at the pictures around Paul. Circle the things you think the friends used to help Paul escape.

- Allow the children time to circle their answers and color their pictures.

SAY: In our story today, Paul gets lowered down a wall in a basket. His friends helped him get away.

Choose the Letters (Puzzle – Younger Elementary)

Before class: Make a copy of Reproducible 13c for each younger elementary child.

SAY: All of the letters that make up the words in the answers to the questions are found in the grid, but they’re not in order. As you answer the questions, cross out the letters you use in the grid. Start with the questions you find easiest. If you get stuck, look at the remaining letters in the grid for help. Also, look at Acts 9 in your Bible to help with the answers.

- Allow the children time to work their puzzles. Then go over the answers.
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Paul Word Search (Puzzle – Older Elementary)

Before class: Make a copy of Reproducible 13d for each older elementary child.

SAY: Look in the word search for the words listed at the bottom of the page. The words can be horizontal, vertical, diagonal, frontwards, and backwards. All of the words are in the story of Paul found in Acts 9:1-25.

- Give the children time to work their puzzles. Then go over the answers.
- Talk about the different words and how they fit into the story of Paul.

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Basket for Paul (Craft)

Before class: Make a copy of Reproducible 13e on card stock for each child.

- Give each child a copy of “A Basket for Paul.”

SAY: Paul takes a ride in a basket in our story. Let’s make a basket for Paul. Follow these directions:

- Set your paper lunch bag up.
 - Cut about 1/2 of the bag off from the top, which is close to the opening.
 - Fold about an inch down on the outside of the bag around the opening.
 - Use a single-hole punch to punch out holes around the top on the folded down part.
 - Thread yarn in and out of the holes around the bag.
 - Tie the ends of a long piece of yarn to the middle of the two short sides.
 - Cut out Paul on this page. Color him and place him in the basket.
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Basket Race (Game)

Before class: Bring two plastic laundry baskets that are rectangular shaped.

ASK: How did Paul escape? (*in a basket*)

SAY: Let’s play a basket race. I will divide you into two teams and give each team a laundry basket. The first in line for both teams will get down on your hands and knees. Then another team member will put the basket on your back. When I say go, you will crawl on your hands and knees to the opposite wall and back. You have to keep the basket on your back. If you lose your basket or don’t crawl on your hands and knees, you have to go back and start again. When you finish your race, the next person in line will remove the basket from your back and get down on hands and knees. Then you will place the basket on that person’s back and go to the end of the line. The race is finished when every team member has made it down and back with the basket.

ASK: Was it easy or difficult to crawl with a basket on your back? How difficult do you think it was for Paul’s friends to lower him in the basket?

Road Trip Trail Mix (Snack)

Before class: Gather the items for the trail mix: fish-shaped crackers, mini marshmallows, cranberries, chocolate candies, and nuts. (Always check to see if any of your children have food allergies.)

ASK: What else do you think was in the basket besides Paul? (*coat, walking stick, food, and so forth*)

SAY: I’m sure Paul took some food to eat on his journey after he escaped in the basket. Let’s mix up our Road Trip Trail Mix and eat some.

- Give the children resealable plastic bags and allow them to put some of each item in their bags.

SAY: Shake up your Road Trip Trail Mix in your plastic bag, and enjoy eating some for a snack.

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Transition to Explore – Sacred Conversations

ASK: Have you ever been helped by a friend? What happened?

EXPLORE

Read the Bible Story

- Ask the children to find Acts 9:20-25 in their Bibles. Encourage them to bring their own Bibles and learn how to use them. Read the story from the *Deep Blue Bible Storybook* (pp. 466–8).

ASK: Why did some people want to hurt Paul? (*They didn’t think he had changed.*) Why did Paul’s friends have to lower him down the outside wall in a basket? (*The people who wanted to hurt Paul were waiting for him at the gate into the city.*)

Dictionary Search

- Allow the children to look up *Damascus* and the picture of the *Marketplace* in the *Deep Blue Kids Bible Dictionary*. Talk about how the wall surrounded the whole city, and only one gate in it was open for people to come in and out.
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See the Bible Story

SAY: Cinnamon, Kat’s cat, runs up a tree when Kat tries to take him to the vet for his checkup. Jack offers to help get him down and tells the story of how Paul got down from a window in a tall wall.

- Watch today’s episode from the Adventure DVD.

ASK: Who helped Kat with Cinnamon? (*Jack, the other kids helped look for him*) Who helped Paul? (*some friends he had met in Damascus*)

Interact with the Bible Story

Before class: Make a copy of *Reproducible 13a* for each child. Ask an adult in your church to play the part of Paul in the Bible story.

SAY: We have a special guest today—Paul. He is going to tell us about his ride in a basket.

- Allow your guest to present the story.
- Give each child a copy of the Bible story to take home.

ASK: Why didn’t some of the people in Damascus believe Paul had changed? (*because he had a reputation for treating followers of Jesus cruelly*) Have you been in a position where the people around you didn’t think you had changed? How did you prove to them that you had changed? How did it make you feel when they didn’t believe you? Do you think you would have believed Paul had changed?

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Bible Verse (Activity)

- Our verse for Unit 3 is Acts 4:20.
- Say the verse without looking at the Bible verse poster.
- Go over the sign language for the Bible verse. Encourage all the children to sign and say the Bible verse with you.

TIP: Look on the Deep Blue Kids website, the Free Stuff tab, to see a video demonstrating the signs.

- Have the children form two lines facing each other. Give the first person in line a beach ball.

SAY: The first person in line will throw the beach ball to the person across from him or her. That person will say the first word in our verse and throw the ball to another person. Continue throwing the ball and saying the next word in the verse. Start over saying the verse when you reach the end. Keep passing the ball up and down the lines until you have gone through the Bible verse several times.

Transition to Respond

ASK: What did Paul start doing when he stayed with the disciples in Dasmascus? (*preaching about Jesus in the synagogues*) What did Paul preach? (*that Jesus is the Christ*)

- Say together, “Jesus is the Christ. God raised Jesus from the grave.”

RESPOND

Loving God, Loving Neighbor

Before class: If it has not been done yet, display the Mission Poster (Resource Pak—p. 7). Make copies of “Mission Letter” (Leader Guide—p. 91).

SAY: This month we are collecting a special mission offering for the John Wesley Community Centre. We have one more week to bring our offerings.

ASK: Where is the Centre located? (*South Africa*)

- Encourage children to find South Africa on a world map.

ASK: What have you learned about this mission? (*allow the children to share what they remember*)

- Give a mission letter to any child who hasn’t received one yet.

Transition to Bless

ASK: How did Paul serve God in Damascus?

- Gather the children around the mural paper you placed on the wall in session 10.
- Talk about the responses that have been added to the paper.

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BLESS

Inviting

Before class: If it hasn't been done yet, place a large piece of mural paper on the wall and write, A Disciple Is . . .

ASK: How would you finish the sentence, A Disciple Is . . . , in a way that would describe Paul in today's story?

- Write the responses on the paper. Talk about the different responses.
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Praising

SAY: Our song this month is "Changed."

- Hand out the songbooks and have the children find the song.
 - Play this month's song and encourage the children to sing and dance to the song.
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Blessing

SAY: Each week before you leave, you will receive a blessing or a challenge. God shows you how special you are by being a part of your life.

- Gather the children in a circle. Go around the circle and offer a challenge to each child.

SAY: (Child's name), God loves you very much.

PRAY: Dear God, thank you for showing us how brave Paul was when he started preaching. Help us boldly share the good news with others; in Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Loving God/Loving Neighbor at Home

Before class: Make a copy of Reproducible 13f for each child.

SAY: "Loving God/Loving Neighbor – Faith Family Devotional" is for you and your family to use at home.

ASK: Can you share the story of Paul escaping from Damascus with your family?

- Send home a copy of Reproducible 13f with each child.

Paul Escapes – Bible Story

13a

Paul: When Jesus spoke to me, my life changed completely. He showed me so much love, even though I had treated his followers cruelly. Jesus changed the hate in my heart into love, and I wanted to share that with others.

With power from God, I began to preach in the synagogues. I told everyone that Jesus is God's Son. But my reputation followed me. The people were confused, and they asked, "Aren't you the one who was wreaking havoc among those in Jerusalem who called on this name? Didn't you come here to take those same people prisoners?"

It was difficult at first to get people to understand what had happened to me. But as I learned from the believers in Damascus, I grew stronger. My new mission became proving that Jesus is the Christ.

Eventually many people believed my story, but not the Jewish leaders. They hatched a plot to kill me. I found out they were keeping watch at the city gates around the clock so they could capture me.

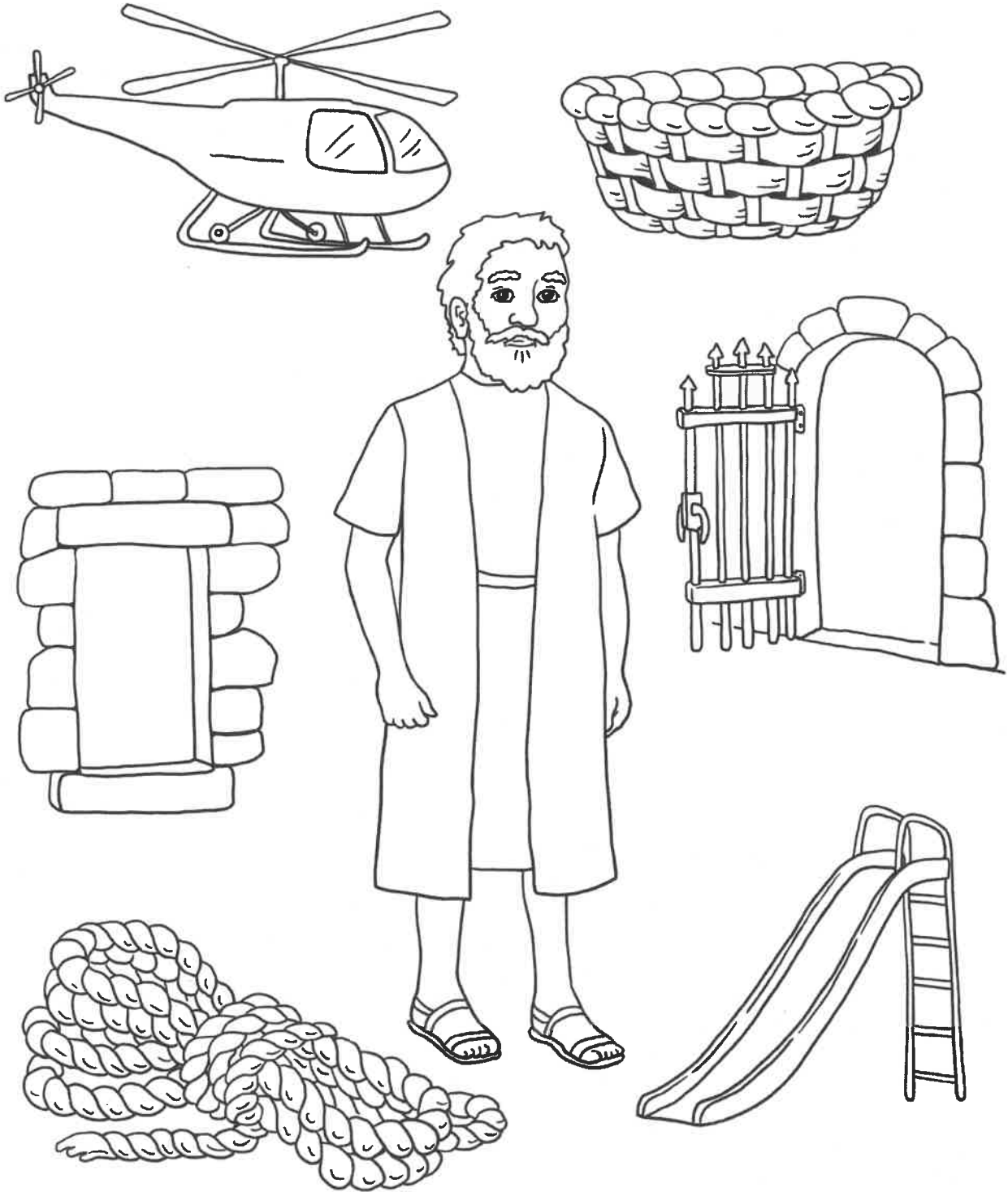
My new friends, who were followers of Jesus, helped me escape. When it was night, they lowered me in a basket through an opening in the city wall. I escaped safely thanks to their help. But I didn't stop telling the good news about Jesus. That was the beginning of my journey with Jesus.

(Based on Acts 9:20-25)



13b What Did They Need? – Puzzle (Preschool)

Some people wanted to bully Paul. Paul's friends helped him get away from the bullies. Look at the pictures around Paul. Circle the things you think the friends used to help Paul escape.



Choose the Letters – Puzzle (Younger Elementary)

13c

All of the letters that make up the words in the answers to the questions are found in the grid. As you answer the questions, cross out the letters you use in the grid. Start with the questions you find easiest. If you get stuck, look at the remaining letters in the grid for help. Also, look at Acts 9 in your Bible to help with the answers.

L	J	S	O	B
G	S	L	T	N
R	I	I	A	D
E	H	E	D	U
A	S	K	B	T

1. Something very unusual happened to Saul when he was walking on the _____ to Damascus.
2. First a _____ shone down from heaven.
3. Then _____ spoke to Saul.
4. Why did the men with Saul have to help him get to Damascus?
He was _____.
5. What did Paul's friends use to help him escape when some people wanted to hurt him?

13d Paul Word Search - Puzzle (Older Elementary)

Look for the words listed at the bottom in the word search. The words can be horizontal, vertical, diagonal, frontwards, and backwards. All of the words are in the story of Paul found in Acts 9.

T	D	I	S	R	E	S	S	U	S	E	J	D	S	L
B	I	A	A	P	P	M	Y	V	L	C	N	H	L	M
H	S	R	O	O	A	B	A	P	T	I	Z	E	D	I
Z	C	R	I	H	U	Y	I	A	L	O	G	M	Z	D
B	W	E	S	P	C	C	N	B	Q	V	S	H	U	M
V	B	S	U	C	S	A	M	A	D	I	N	A	T	Z
H	T	T	I	I	N	Y	E	D	P	Z	V	W	A	Z
Q	E	E	D	I	O	T	L	R	Z	E	H	K	G	C
Q	B	M	A	T	I	Z	A	O	P	J	B	Y	P	O
H	R	S	I	U	S	Y	S	L	H	A	L	S	W	O
L	E	K	K	Q	I	I	U	A	S	U	U	H	T	S
G	A	J	P	N	V	R	R	K	U	W	W	L	L	J
K	S	Z	G	S	E	Y	E	H	W	L	P	F	F	E
B	D	A	H	G	D	T	J	L	C	Z	M	T	X	V
Q	O	V	J	N	N	J	U	G	O	R	O	Y	R	C

ANANIAS

CHRIST

JERUSALEM

PRAYING

ARREST

DAMASCUS

JESUS

PREACH

BAPTIZED

DISCIPLE

LIGHT

ROPE

BASKET

EYES

LORD

SAUL

BLIND

HOLY SPIRIT

PAUL

VISION

VOICE

Basket for Paul – Activity

Materials:

- paper lunch bags
- yarn
- single-hole punch
- colors
- markers
- card stock

Directions:

- Set your paper lunch bag up.
- Cut about 1/3 of the bag off from the top, which is close to the opening.
- Fold about an inch down on the outside of the bag around the opening.
- Use a single-hole punch to punch out holes around the top on the folded down part.
- Thread yarn in and out of the holes around the bag.
- Tie the ends of a long piece of yarn to the middle of the two short sides.
- Cut out Paul on this page. Color him and place him in the basket.



13f Loving God/Loving Neighbor – Faith Family Devotional

Paul Escapes

Acts 9:20-25

God showed great love to Paul, and that love changed Paul's whole life. With the power of the Holy Spirit, Paul began to preach in the synagogues and share his good news. He told everyone that once he persecuted anyone who followed Jesus, because he had hate in his heart. But Jesus spoke to him, and that hate turned to love. He had a new mission, to share the good news of Jesus. But not everyone believed Paul had changed. Some even plotted to kill him. Paul's new friends helped him escape by lowering him in a basket to the outside of the city wall, and Paul kept preaching.

Verse of the Month

"As for us, we can't stop speaking about what we have seen and heard." Acts 4:20

What Do You Think?

Do you think you would have believed that Paul had totally changed?

How can God change hate into love?

Family Activity

Talk about the change in Paul's life. Why do you think Jesus spoke to Paul when Paul was treating the church cruelly?

What can you as a family do to show God's love to those around you? Make a list of ways to show love. Talk about the opportunities you have each day to show love to others.

Prayer

Loving God, thank you for loving us, even when we're not lovable. Show us how to love others like you love us; in Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.