

Lesson on Paul in Thessalonica and Berea

Scripture: Acts 17:1-15

Big Idea: Paul continues to bravely teach the message of Jesus.

Opening Thoughts:

When we last left Paul, he was in prison in the city of Philippi. He faced some big challenges, especially when he was thrown in prison. But God watched over Paul and Silas. Not only did God rescue them from prison but the prison keeper and his family chose to believe in Jesus!

Activity: Journey with Paul

You will need: Nothing! Simply some kids to play.

How to play: Have your kids stand up and spread out throughout the room. Share the following, "Paul, went on some really big journeys to tell other people about Jesus. Along the way, he faced all kinds of challenges. Not everyone wanted to hear what Paul had to say. But for many, Paul's message about God's love changed their lives. I want you to imagine you are walking with Paul from city to city proclaiming the good news of Jesus. Have your kids begin walking around the room. Instruct them to keep some space from one another and have them continue in a loop around the room as you read today's Bible story from Acts 17:1-15. There will be a few points where you'll pause. When you do, have your kids shout out, "Paul, keep following Jesus!" Then, give them a new instruction adding a new challenge to how they continue to walk around the room. Below you'll see the pause points and the challenges listed out:

Students walk in a loop – Read Acts 17:1-4 – Pause

Students continue the loop hopping on one leg – Read Acts 17:5 – Pause

Students continue the loop this time crawling – Read Acts 17:6-7 – Pause

Students continue the loop walking backwards – Read Acts 17:8-9 – Pause

Students continue the loop doing a crabwalk – Read Acts 17:10-11 – Pause

Students continue the loop walking normally – Read Acts 17:12-15 – Pause

Debrief: How do you feel? Do any of you feel tired, worn out, ready for a nap? Can you imagine what it must have been like traveling to so many places like Paul did? What were some of the challenges Paul faced in the stories we shared?

Paul had to be brave to continue his journey. How do you think Paul's relationship with Jesus helped him to be brave? Do you think that Jesus can help you to be brave too?

What are some reasons that we need Jesus' help to be brave right now?

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We are a community of Jesus followers who love God, love one another and make disciples.

Activity: Courage

Introduce: When we think about bravery, certain ideas that come to mind. We think about people doing brave things like walking a tightrope, or rushing into a dangerous situation to save someone. Or we think about people like Paul, who continued to share the good news of Jesus no matter what he faced. Those are certainly examples of bravery. But there are smaller more ordinary ways to be brave. For example, it takes courage to admit when we did something wrong. It takes courage to ask someone for forgiveness. It takes courage to give our time, our energy, and our treasures to support Jesus' mission. When I know what my purpose is, just like Paul did, it can help me to be brave and to keep going even when things are hard. Let's play a game to help us think about that idea.

How to play: This game works like red light, green light. You stand at one end of the room to lead. The kids gather in a straight line at the other end of the room facing you. When your back is turned to your kids they can move forward. When you are facing them, they have to stop in place. If you visually catch someone moving when you turn to face them they must go back to the starting line. When you turn your back to the group, instead of saying, "Green Light", you will say, "Safety". When you turn to face the group, instead of saying, "Red Light", you will say, "Danger". This version will have another twist. When you have turned to face the kids and they are all frozen in place you may point to one who must say the phrase, "Jesus makes me brave!" You cannot help them by prompting them with the phrase, they must remember it on their own. If they can't remember the phrase you can either have them stay put or you may send them back to the beginning. Depending on how loudly and confidently they say this you may invite them to take anywhere between one and three additional steps forward. Use your discretion to balance the game out. But it is completely okay for there to be a clear winner. The first kid to make it across the room wins the round.

Debrief: Sometimes when we are faced with a hard situation we freeze, like we did in our game. Here's an example; Imagine that you did something wrong and you know it was wrong, you want to make things right by telling the truth but you hesitate to do so. Why do you think we might be afraid to admit we've done wrong? How do you think Jesus can help us to be brave in moments like that? Think about Paul, he could have stopped his journey at any time. There were people that wanted to put him in prison, and worse. He kept going! How do you think Jesus helped Paul to be brave?

Close in Prayer:

Using the following prayer, or one of your own.

Jesus, thank you that you helped Paul to be brave. Thank you that you help us to be brave too. Help us to remember that you are always with us and to remember how much you love us when we feel afraid. Amen.