

LESSON 9: PAUL ENCOURAGES OTHERS DURING A SHIPWRECK

Leader Guide for Ages 3-6

Classroom: Monkeys

 Acts 27

10/18/2020

Teachers Dig In

Dig In to the Bible

- Read: Acts 27
- In This Passage: Paul is being transported as a prisoner on a ship when a violent storm threatens to sink the ship. But God encourages Paul, letting him know that no one on the ship will die when the ship wrecks. Paul passes on that encouragement, and everyone gets safely to shore.
- Bible Point: God is encouraging...
- Application: ...so we encourage others.
- Summary Verse: "A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power" (Ephesians 6:10).

Dig Deeper

- You'll Be Teaching: *God is encouraging.* A lot of kids wrestle with self-doubt and insecurity. (*Am I smart enough? Am I pretty enough? Am I strong enough? Do people like me?*) As you talk about God's encouragement, find ways to encourage kids. You'll set an example *and* give them words they need to hear.
- Think About: Think of three encouraging things people have said to you. Thank God for sending those encouraging words through other people.

Dig In to Prayer

- Ask God to give you the right words so you can encourage kids with just what they need to hear.

Quick Tip

- As a Sunday school teacher, you might feel taken for granted by your kids. Maybe you don't get a lot of encouragement for what you do. So let us encourage you: You're doing God's work. You're making a lasting difference. You're touching kids' lives in ways you'll never know...but God knows. Thank you for all you do! Keep up the good work; you're amazing!

This Lesson at a Glance



OPENING

Preschoolers share about a topic related to the lesson.

Supplies

- Bible



CORE BIBLE DISCOVERY

Preschoolers act out the story and encourage each other.

Supplies

- Bible
- painter's tape
- fan with at least 2 settings
- spray bottle of water
- paper lunch bags (1 per child)
- scrap paper

Easy Prep

- Create 1 piece of "cargo" per child by stuffing paper lunch bags with scrap paper and folding the tops closed.
- Use the painter's tape to create 2 "boats" on the floor large enough to fit all your kids. Scatter the "cargo" in one of the boats.



LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

Preschoolers pretend to be on a boat and pray.

Supplies

- taped boat outlines from Core Bible Discovery



OBJECT LESSON

Preschoolers use water to lift ping-pong balls.

Supplies

- large container that will hold water
- ping-pong balls (at least 1 per child)
- large cups or pitchers (1 per child)
- water

Easy Prep

- Fill cups with water. If you have a smaller class, consider using pitchers so each child has more water.



HIGH-ENERGY GAME

Preschoolers pretend to hop on islands.

Supplies

- large paper plates (1 per child)
- painter's tape*
- upbeat music
- music player

Easy Prep

- Tape 2 parallel lines on the floor about 10 feet apart. Make the lines as long as necessary for the size of your group, allowing about 1 foot per child.
- Next, tape paper plates to the floor between the 2 lines, spacing them so preschoolers will be able to hop from plate to plate to get from one line to the other.



LOW-ENERGY GAME

Preschoolers play a version of Memory.

Supplies

- "Shipwreck Cards" handout (2 copies for every 5

Easy Prep

- Make a set of cards for each group of 5 or 6

- or 6 kids) (download [here](#))
- upbeat music
- music player

preschoolers by making 2 copies of the “Shipwreck Cards” handout and cutting the cards apart along the dotted lines. Remove 1 shipwreck card so each set has only 1 shipwreck card.



CRAFT

Preschoolers make boats that rock.

Supplies

- paper dinner plates (1 per child)
- drinking straws (1 per child)
- glue sticks
- packing tape
- “Encouraging Sails” handout (1 for every 6 kids) (download [here](#))
- star, smile, and heart stickers
- markers

Easy Prep

- Make a sample craft to show kids.
- Cut apart the “Encouraging Sails” handout.

**Marked supplies can be reused from Core Bible Discovery*

Let's keep kids safe! You can help by using supplies as instructed for only ages 3+, purchasing child-safe items, and being aware of allergy concerns.



OPENING

Welcome

[5 min]

Supplies

- Bible

Welcome

- Thank kids for coming.
- Just for fun, have preschoolers make a silly animal noise at two different friends.
- Make announcements.
- Introduce new kids.
- Celebrate birthdays by having preschoolers sing “Happy Birthday” with their lips tucked over their teeth.
- Collect the offering.

Introduce the Lesson

Say: **Today we'll find out that God is encouraging. *Encourage* means to help people feel better when they're sad or worried and to give them strength to do something hard. God encourages us all the time, and we can encourage others, too. Today we'll read in the Bible about a man named Paul who encouraged others when they were in a boat in a scary storm. Let's start today by talking about water and boats. We'll all get to share whether we'd rather be on a boat, swimming in the water, or on a beach.**

Share

- Share where *you'd* rather be and why. You might rather be swimming because you love to feel the water and splash in it. Or you might rather be lying on a beach soaking in sun.
- Ask: • **Where would *you* rather be? Would you rather be on a boat, swimming in the water, or on a beach away from the water?** In leader-led small groups, have preschoolers share where they'd rather be and why. Preschoolers might share that they haven't learned to swim yet so they'd rather be on a boat, enjoying the water. Or they might share that they'd rather be on a beach because they love to build sandcastles.
- After small groups have discussed, have adult or teen helpers share with the whole group what they talked about in their small groups.

Summarize

Open a Bible, and say: **Thanks for sharing. Sometimes we don't want to do something because it seems scary—we'll read about some men in the Bible who were scared on a boat because there was a big storm. But God led his friend Paul to encourage them, and God encourages us, too, when we're worried or scared. Let's read more about how God is encouraging in the Bible.**

Pray, thanking God that he's encouraging to us.



Supplies

- Bible
- painter's tape
- fan with at least 2 settings
- spray bottle of water
- paper lunch bags (1 per child)
- scrap paper

Easy Prep

- Create 1 piece of "cargo" per child by stuffing paper lunch bags with scrap paper and folding the tops closed.
- Use the painter's tape to create 2 "boats" on the floor large enough to fit all your kids. Scatter the "cargo" in one of the boats.

Sail in Calm Waters

Say: **Today we'll find out that God is encouraging. That means God helps us feel better when we're worried or afraid, and he helps us know everything is going to be okay.**

Open the Bible. Say: **The Bible tells about a time God's friends Paul and Luke were on a big boat headed to a new place. There were lots of people on the boat with them. Let's fill up this boat with all our friends here.** Lead kids to get into the boat you made ahead of time that doesn't have any cargo.

Say: **Let's head off to a new place—be encouraged because God's with us and he'll take care of us!** Lead kids in pretending to row for about 15 seconds.

Say: **Feels like we're moving now. The people in the Bible—Paul, Luke, and all the others—sailed for one day.** Lead kids in pretending to row again as you say: **Paul was on the boat because he was a prisoner, even though Paul hadn't done anything wrong.**

After a day of sailing, the boat stopped and the prison guards let Paul get off and spend time with his friends. Lead kids in stepping out of the boat.

Say: **Paul's friends took care of him and gave him the things he needed. They were encouraging like God is encouraging. God helped Paul's friends know how to be encouraging. Maybe they gave Paul something to eat.** Lead kids in pretending to eat. **Maybe they cleaned an owie Paul had.** Lead kids in pretending to bandage another child's wrist. **It's nice to encourage others by taking care of them.**

Sail in a Storm

Say: **That same day, Paul got back on the boat and it sailed some more.** Lead kids to climb back into the boat they were originally on. **This time, some strong winds started blowing.** Turn the fan on the lowest setting and direct it at kids. **The wind blew so strongly that the people couldn't make the boat go where they wanted it to.** Have kids sway back and forth. **Don't worry! Even though the winds are strong, we'll all be okay!**

Turn off the fan. Say: **Then they docked at a new place, and the soldiers moved the prisoners to a new boat that was heading where they needed to go.** Lead kids to climb out of the boat they're in and into the other boat with the cargo.

Say: **A new big boat might've been scary. They didn't even get to decide where they were going. But God is encouraging, and God was with them. And for several days the sailing was fine.** Pause. **But then it became windy again.** Turn the fan on low. **The weather got worse and worse!** Turn the fan on high, and spray kids with water as if waves are splashing into the boat. Have kids sway with bigger motions.

Say: **Paul told the captain, "There's trouble ahead. If we keep going, we'll wreck the boat!" But the captain didn't listen, and they kept going. And it became even more windy and even more wavy. The sailors threw all their things overboard to make the boat lighter so it wouldn't sink.** Lead kids to toss each piece of cargo you made ahead of time overboard.

Say: **The crew on the boat were worried. They didn't eat for days—the storm went on for 14 days!** Lead kids in counting to 14.

Say: **Paul encouraged everyone by saying, "God is with us, and he's going to keep us safe." God even sent an angel to Paul who told him, "Don't worry!" And Paul used the courage God gave him to encourage the others.**

The sailors decided to drop an anchor into the water to see how deep the water was. The water was getting shallower, so they threw four anchors out of the boat on the other side to try to slow down the boat. Have kids pretend to pick up an anchor and toss it out of the boat.

Say: **Paul reminded everyone they'd been so worried that they hadn't eaten any food, so he broke some bread and thanked God for it, and he shared some with everyone.** Have kids pretend to eat a piece of bread. **By sharing food, Paul encouraged them in the same way that God is encouraging.**

By the morning, they realized they were near some land, so they cut the anchors that were holding them back. But then they hit some sand under the water! The waves crashed against them, and the boat began to break apart. So some people jumped overboard and swam to shore. Others floated on pieces from the broken boat. Lead all the kids to hop out of the boat and pretend to swim to "shore," leading them to a new area of your room. Turn off the fan.

Say: **They made it to shore safely. Everyone was okay, just as Paul had told them they'd be!** Lead kids to cheer. **God was with them, and God encourages us to believe he's always with us, too.**

Encourage Each Other

Have kids sit in a circle. Say: **God likes when we encourage others like Paul did. Let's practice encouraging others right now.** Lead kids to do the following to practice being encouraging.

- Say: **Go tell someone across the circle, "God's always with you!"** Have all the kids get up and tell the sentence to someone. Then have them sit in a circle again.
- Say: **Tell each of the people next to you, "God loves you!"** Have all the kids tell this to their neighbors without getting up.
- Say: **Give someone across the circle a high-five and say, "You're special!"** Have all kids get up and follow the instructions and then return to their seats.

If time allows, have kids encourage others some more. For example, kids might tell each other they're strong, they can trust God, or God takes care of them.

Say: **We can encourage others like God is encouraging. It feels nice to encourage others and be encouraged!** Leave the taped boats in place for use in the Life Application Wrap-Up.



Supplies

- taped boat outlines from Core Bible Discovery

Pretend to Be in a Storm

Say: **Today we learned that God is encouraging, so we encourage others, too. We heard how some men were on a boat in a storm and really needed encouragement!**

Lead kids to pretend to get into a boat together. Then lead them in pretending they're in a storm by swaying back and forth and patting their knees to make rain sounds and saying "Crack!" to make thunder sounds.

Have kids freeze in place. Say: **God encouraged the men by giving them Paul, who let them know that God would take care of them. Sometimes we need encouragement from God, too. Sometimes we need encouragement because we're trying something new. Other times we need encouragement because we're scared or worried. God's always with us when our lives feels like a storm. And God reminds us we can be brave.**

Share about a hard time *you* or a loved one are going through that you want God's encouragement for.

Ask: • **What's something *you* want to ask God to encourage you about? You could ask God for encouragement about a worry you have or for God to encourage your family to get along.**

Lead kids in a brief prayer for the things they shared. Ask God for encouragement, and ask him to help you and the kids encourage others when they're feeling sad or worried.

Pretend to Be in Calm Waters

Say: **When we talk to God about our worries and fears, he'll encourage us. He can help us be calm even in a scary time. We might say he can "calm the waters."**

Lead kids in pretending to be in calm waters. Have them sway back and forth gently.

Say: **God encourages us, and we can encourage others, too. Let's thank God that he hears us and he'll encourage us when we ask for it.**

Lead kids in a brief prayer thanking God that he's encouraging.

Say: **I encourage *you* to remember God's with you this week and to encourage others, too. I hope you'll come back next week with stories about how you were encouraged and how you encouraged others!**



OBJECT LESSON

[10 min]

Lift Them Up!

Supplies

- large container that will hold water
- ping-pong balls (at least 1 per child)
- large cups or pitchers (1 per child)
- water

Easy Prep

- Fill cups with water. If you have a smaller class, consider using pitchers so each child has more water.

Add Ping-Pong Balls

Start by encouraging kids for something they've done well during today's lesson. Perhaps they listened to instructions well during a game, sang a song with enthusiasm, or worked hard to make a craft.

Say: **I just encouraged you! Encouraging words lift people's hearts, making them feel happy even during sad times.**

- Distribute ping-pong balls. Have each child think of someone he or she knows who's sad. The ping-pong ball will represent that person.
- Have kids place their ping-pong balls into the container.

Pour Water Into the Container

Say: **Our sad friends need some encouragement. Let's see if we can lift up their sad hearts!**

- Give each child a cup of water.
- Have kids say something encouraging together as they all pour water into the container. Keep the message simple, like "You're nice!" or "God loves you." The water will lift up the ping-pong balls!
- If time allows, refill cups and have kids pour more "encouragement" to lift the ping-pong balls even higher.

Talk About It

Say: **Look! The water lifted our sad ping-pong ball friends. And encouraging words lift and encourage our hearts, too.**

Ask: • **When you're sad, who encourages you?** Tell about someone from your own life to begin. Perhaps it's a spouse, a parent, or a friend from work.

Say: **God gives us people to encourage us. God is encouraging. Our words encourage and lift people up!**



HIGH-ENERGY GAME

[10 min]

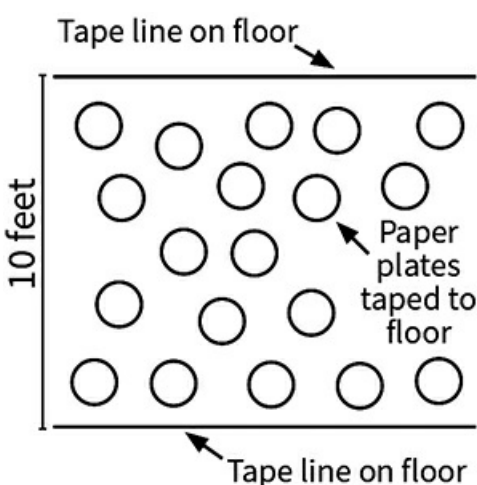
Island Hopping

Supplies

- large paper plates (1 per child)
- painter's tape*
- upbeat music
- music player

Easy Prep

- Tape 2 parallel lines on the floor about 10 feet apart. Make the lines as long as necessary for the size of your group, allowing about 1 foot per child.
- Next, tape paper plates to the floor between the 2 lines, spacing them so preschoolers will be able to hop from plate to plate to get from one line to the other.



Tip

- If you used the Music Video block, consider repeating the songs from today's lesson during the game. You can find the downloadable album [here](#).

Hop on Paper Plate "Islands"

Say: **In today's Bible story we read about how Paul encouraged everyone with him during a wild storm at sea. After their ship wrecked, everyone had to get to dry, safe land. Let's play a game where we'll pretend our ship has wrecked and we have to hop on little islands to get to dry land!**

- Have everyone line up along one of the lines—the "sinking ship."
- Point out the other line as the "dry land."
- Everyone will hop randomly from "island" to "island" (the paper plates) while the music plays. When the music stops, kids will hop quickly from island to island to get to dry land.
- Have all the adult and teen helpers stand behind the dry land line and cheer on the preschoolers as they hop across.
- Play as many rounds as time allows, and vary the lengths of time you play the music.

Talk About It

Ask: • **What did you like about the leaders cheering you on?**

Say: **It's awesome to be encouraged! We can do big, hard things when we're encouraged.**

Tell about a time *you* weren't willing to do something because you thought you couldn't, but after some encouragement you tried and succeeded—such as learning to swim or drive.

Ask: • **Tell about a time *you* tried to do something new.** Preschoolers might tell about brushing their teeth, putting on their shoes, trying new food, or staying with a new babysitter. As they share, ask them about who encouraged them.

Say: **Encouragement can help us be brave and feel strong and safe. God is encouraging, and we can share the encouragement we get from God with others.**



LOW-ENERGY GAME

[10 min]

Shipwreck Shuffle

Supplies

- “Shipwreck Cards” handout (2 copies for every 5 or 6 kids) (download [here](#))
- upbeat music
- music player

Easy Prep

- Make a set of cards for each group of 5 or 6 preschoolers by making 2 copies of the “Shipwreck Cards” handout and cutting the cards apart along the dotted lines. Remove 1 shipwreck card so each set has only 1 shipwreck card.

Tip

- If you used the Music Video block, consider repeating the songs from today’s lesson during the game. You can find the downloadable album [here](#).

Play an Encouraging Memory Game

Say: **We’re learning that God is encouraging, and God helped Paul encourage others even when they went through a scary shipwreck! Let’s play a fun game where you’ll encourage each other and try to find a special shipwreck card.**

- Form groups of five or six preschoolers and at least one adult or teen helper, and have the groups spread out to sit in circles.
- Give each group’s helper a set of cards you’ve prepared.
- Have the helper lay the cards out facedown inside the group’s circle.
- Play music for about 30 seconds. While the music plays, the team members will take turns, one person at a time around the circle, flipping over a card to try to find the shipwreck card. Kids can encourage each other and give ideas of where they think the shipwreck card is.
- When a team finds the shipwreck card, the team members can all call out “Shipwreck!” and fall over.
- Call out a 10-second countdown before you’re about to turn off the music. Then have everyone stop, and see how many teams found the shipwreck card.
- Have teams shuffle and reset their cards. Kids can “shuffle” where they’re sitting in their team circle, too. Everyone can give encouraging high-fives to their new neighbors in the circle and then play the game again.
- Vary the intervals of time you allow the music to play, and have fun with the countdowns to “time’s up.”

Talk About It

Ask: • **What did you do to encourage your friends in the game?**

Say: **We can encourage others in a lot of those ways in real life, too! My favorite way to encourage my friends or my family is...** Tell about a way you like to encourage others, such as putting together care packages or giving really good hugs.

Ask: • **What’s your favorite way to encourage someone?** Preschoolers might share about cheering others up with kind words, hugs, high-fives, or even making special treats with a parent to give to the person who needs some encouragement.

Say: **It sounds like you’re great encouragers! God is encouraging and can help us encourage others. It’s an awesome way to share God’s love and joy!**



CRAFT

Rocking Boats

[20 min]

Supplies

- paper dinner plates (1 per child)
- drinking straws (1 per child)
- glue sticks
- packing tape
- “Encouraging Sails” handout (1 for every 6 kids) (download [here](#))
- star, smile, and heart stickers
- markers

Easy Prep

- Make a sample craft to show kids.
- Cut apart the “Encouraging Sails” handout.



Talk About It

Say: **Today we learned that God is encouraging, so we can be encouraging. Remember, we're encouraging by saying or doing something that helps someone else feel better or be brave. When Paul was on the boat, he encouraged the other men by telling them that God was going to take care of them. We can encourage people, too. Let's make boats of our own to remind us to encourage people around us.**

Make Rocking Ships

- Give each child a plate and a straw.
- Have kids color the top of their plates with markers.
- Help each child put glue on the bottom of the plate and then fold it in half, holding the plate together for a few seconds to make sure the glue takes hold.
- Help each child tape a straw to a plate and an “Encouraging Sail” to the straw. Read aloud the message on the sails.
- Give kids a variety of stickers to decorate their boats. Point out how the shapes represent different types of encouragement. For example, a star could be like telling someone “Good job!” A heart could be like telling someone “God loves you!” A smile could be like giving a hug when someone is sad.

Rock the Boat

When kids have finished decorating their boats, say: **Now that we have our boats built, let's pretend to sail them. First, let's rock them slowly like we're sailing on a nice calm sea.** Encourage kids to gently rock their boats back and forth.

Say: **Now let's pretend we're in a storm like Paul was.** Encourage the kids to rock the boats more rapidly.

Say: **We all have times we feel like everything is wild and scary, like these boats that are rocking in a big storm. That's when we need others to encourage us. And when we see others who are going through something hard or scary, our boats can remind us that we can encourage them, too.**

The Heart of God, Lesson 9: Paul Encourages Others During a Shipwreck. Design and base content copyright © Group Publishing, Inc. Licensed for use with 1-20 students. Permission to reproduce granted for local church use only.