



LESSON 4

PAUL'S SHIPWRECK

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: The Holy Spirit Gives Us Courage

SCRIPTURE: Acts 27–28

GOD'S BIG STORY: Paul—who was eager to share the good news of Jesus with the Roman emperor, Caesar—was imprisoned and taken onto a ship sailing toward Rome. Miraculously, all passengers survive a catastrophic shipwreck.

WORD OF WONDER: Don't live the way this world lives. Let your way of thinking be completely changed. Then you will be able to test what God wants for you. And you will agree that what he wants is right. His plan is good and pleasing and perfect. —Romans 12:2

CURIOSITY

BELIEF

FAITH

- Pre-Service Connection
 - Welcome Question: Who's the bravest character you've ever seen or read about?
 - Curiosity Questions
- Discussion Questions for Younger and Older Kids
- Small Group Prayer Time
- Word of Wonder: Romans 12:2
- Word of Wonder Activity
- LARGE GROUP
- Responding in Worship: Rocky Shoals
- Optional Game: Fear Factory



Transformed Elementary Spotify playlist

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: The Holy Spirit Gives Us Courage

SCRIPTURE: Acts 27–28

WORD OF WONDER: Romans 12:2

Have you been weathering any storms lately? The storms in life can be rough. They can shake your confidence, wreak havoc on your relationships, and cause you to question everything. Scripture warns us that storms will come. When they do, meditate on God's promises. He won't leave you during your storm; He'll be right there beside you.

Paul saw his share of storms (both literally and spiritually). Throughout his ministry, Paul was beaten, mocked, and imprisoned almost more times than we can count. But there was one constant throughout: he never gave up. He never stopped doing the work God called him to do; he never called it quits in the midst of a storm. Look at Paul's encouraging words to the others on the ship with him during a physical storm in Acts 27:25: "So keep up your courage" (NIV). Paul got it. He knew, that on his own, he didn't stand a chance against the storm; but Paul wasn't alone.

Whatever storm you are going through, know your survival isn't dependent on you and your giftedness. As Paul reminds us again in Ephesians 6, it's not our battle. We merely need to stand firm and to take courage. Give your storms and battles to the Lord. He will never leave you. He will lead you, guide you, and see you through ... so take courage.

—Amber Pike

Kidmin Leader and Author

Contributor to Wonder Ink

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

Luke, author of both the Gospel of Luke and Acts, writes in the first-person voice only in the final chapters of Acts (the “we” passages). Many Bible commentators take this to mean that Luke was a travel companion of Paul and present during these events.

WHAT?

Paul's elevated status meant that a centurion guarded him. This centurion saved his life, for whereas the other soldiers were planning to kill the prisoners, Paul's guard persuades them to trust the prisoners to swim—requiring that their chains be removed (Acts 27:43).

WHERE?

When the ship came to rest on the island of Malta (Acts 28:1), it had traveled at least 600 miles from Crete. These are some of the most treacherous waters in the Mediterranean Sea.

WHEN?

A voyage after the feast of the Day of Atonement (Acts 27:9) means the ship was traveling to Rome as late as October, when the dangerous conditions of winter were already threatening. Travel by ship would become outright impossible in only a few short weeks.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

From Luke 8:22–25, we know Jesus has the authority to command the winds and the waves. Like Jesus, who was able to sleep during a storm, Paul calmly urges his companions to eat and await God's deliverance (Acts 27:33–34).

Large Group or Small Group

Spark curiosity, encourage exploration, and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: The Holy Spirit Gives Us Courage

SCRIPTURE: Acts 27–28

WORD OF WONDER: Romans 12:2

Pre-Service (15–20 min)

RESOURCES: [Coloring Page](#)

Small group leaders should be seated in place in their small group 20 minutes prior to service time. Have play stations with various board games, activities, or use games from the extra Games & Activities Guide to keep children occupied and engaged WITH you. This time is important to build relationships, welcome new kids, and keep structure in the room - you should be an active participant with them!

Learn the kids names, and make sure they all know yours too!

Warmly welcome new friends, and introduce them to your group.

Allow quieter kids who don't engage with the board games to color. Involve them in the curiosity questions.

While kids are playing in their opening activity groups..

Pose the following “I’m curious” questions. Say “I’m curious...” before each question and give kids a chance to think about and answer each one. After each question, consider having kids share their ideas with a neighbor before you call on one or two of them to share with the group.

I’m curious ...

- **What do you think it means to be brave?**
- **What do you think it means to be courageous?**

Leader Tip: Help kids understand that bravery is not defined by our actions in dangerous or difficult situations. Courage runs deeper—it’s the state of our hearts when we depend on God (not just ourselves) for whatever comes next. As Jesus-followers, being courageous means trusting God in every situation, even when we might feel scared.

Small Group Begins: Welcome Question 2–3 min

SUPPLIES: whiteboard, poster paper, or butcher paper, writing utensils

As kids arrive, invite them to write/draw the answer to the Welcome Question: **“Who’s the bravest character you’ve ever seen or read about?”**

Right at your service time, move into Small Group time by sharing your own answers and allowing kids to talk about their answers.

Large Group

Guide kids into knowing God, exploring His big story, and marveling at His wonder.

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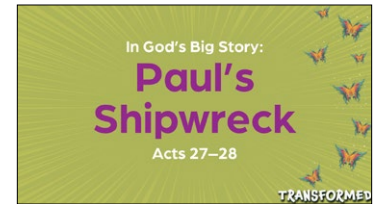
Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God’s big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use the prayer here or your own words: **Your Holy Spirit gives us courage, God, and we thank You for being with us so we never have to face scary stuff alone. You are our strength and comfort, God! In Jesus’ name, Amen.**

God’s Big Story

Hear It, Watch It, Experience It!

This lesson includes three opportunities for your kids to enter the story—each one reinforces the others! **HEAR** it read directly from the Bible. **WATCH** it in a video. **EXPERIENCE** it through the live script.



SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid)

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Shipwreck Title Slide, [Paul's Shipwreck God's Big Story Video](#)

Display the Shipwreck Title Slide. As kids turn to Acts 27, explain how Acts is packed with amazing things that happened to the first Jesus-followers, including miraculous healings, prison escapes, and a ship-splintering shipwreck that threw 276 people into a stormy sea! **Let's start by reading part of God's big story directly from the Bible. Afterward, we will watch and experience more of the story!**

Explain that you'll be reading several portions of the shipwreck story, and, as you do, kids will stand and pretend they're crowded together on a ship being tossed around by huge waves. They'll sway as though tossed by the wind as you read aloud Acts 27:9–14, 21–26, 42–44.

Then do one or both of the following:

- View [Paul's Shipwreck God's Big Story Video](#)
- Use the following Paul's Shipwreck Experience It! Script

Small Group Discussion: Younger Kids 5–8 min

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid), large blanket or towel (1 per SG)

Invite kids to turn to Acts 27, explain how Acts is packed with amazing things that happened to the first Jesus-followers, including miraculous healings, prison escapes, and a ship-splintering shipwreck that threw 276 people into a stormy sea! Explain that you'll be reading several portions of the shipwreck story, and, as you do, kids will stand and pretend they're crowded together on a ship being tossed around by huge waves. The towel or blanket is your "ship." They'll sway as though tossed by the wind as you read the story.

Read Acts 27:9–14, 21–26, 42–44 aloud.

- **God sent Paul to Rome in an unusual way. What was it?**
- **Why do you think the sailors and soldiers didn't listen to Paul's warning that their ship would sail into bad weather?**
- **Imagine you were on board the ship with Paul as the storm raged. What would you have seen? What would you have heard? What would you have been thinking?**
- **How did Paul show courage in today's part of God's big story?**
- **Paul could be courageous because he knew God was with him. How do you know God is with you?**
- **The Holy Spirit gave Paul courage in a big storm and the courage to tell lots of people about Jesus. How has the Holy Spirit given you courage?**

"Paul was courageous in the storm, not because he was particularly strong or brave on his own, but because he knew God was with him. All of us face situations that are hard or scary, and we need courage! I'm glad the Holy Spirit gives us courage! Let's thank God for His gift of the Holy Spirit and pray for our friends too."

Leader Tip: Lots of questions are provided; you don't need to use them all. If kids are digging deeply into a question, making discoveries and learning, pause there. The goal isn't to get through all the material of a lesson, it's to connect kids deeply to God's Word and Jesus. If that's happening, don't be in a rush to move on.

Prayer Time: Younger Kids

Encourage kids to share prayer requests before praying for one another, praising God for answered prayers, and thanking God for the courage we get from the Holy Spirit. Sharing and praying in small groups may help kids who are shy to speak up and also pray aloud—two very good things!

Small Group Discussion: Older Kids 8–12 min

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid) large blanket or towel (1 per SG)

Invite kids to turn to Acts 27, explain how Acts is packed with amazing things that happened to the first Jesus-followers, including miraculous healings, prison escapes, and a ship-splintering shipwreck that threw 276 people into a stormy sea!

Give a brief overview of the history and context using the info on page 3 of this guide.

Explain that you'll be reading several portions of the shipwreck story, and, as you do, kids will stand and pretend they're crowded together on a ship being tossed around by huge waves. The towel or blanket is your "ship." They'll sway as though tossed by the wind as you read the story.

Read Acts 27:9–14, 21–26, 42–44 aloud.

- **God helped Paul get to Rome in an unusual way. How did it happen?**
- **In what ways did Paul show courage in today's part of God's big story?**
- **Imagine you were on board the ship with Paul as the storm raged. What would you have seen? What would you have heard? What would you have been thinking?**
- **Paul was sure of his mission because he asked God what to do and God showed him. How do you go about asking God to guide you?**
- **God promises He'll be with us, but not that we'll always be physically safe. How do you feel about that?**
- **Where do you see God at work in this part of God's big story? What does this story show us about God?**
- **Paul's mission was to tell as many people about Jesus as he could. What do you think your mission from God might be? If it's to tell others about Jesus, who do you want to tell?**
- **The Holy Spirit gave Paul courage during the shipwreck and also as he told people about Jesus. When are some times the Holy Spirit has given you courage?**

Leader Tip: Some of these questions are difficult and answering them requires kids to be honest with themselves and others. Give kids time and space to think, and assure them it's OK if they aren't ready to share their thoughts out loud.

"Paul was courageous in the storm not because he was particularly strong or brave on his own, but because he knew God was with him. All of us face situations that are hard or scary, and we need courage from the Holy Spirit! Let's thank God for His gift of the Holy Spirit and pray for our friends too."

*****Have kids turn to their RBKids Notes Page and invite them to fill in the questions and spaces. Talk through each section with them, engaging in conversation about their answers. Instruct them to use the bottom "Small Group" section to write any thoughts, prayers, or questions from today that they want to talk to their parents about when they get home.**

Prayer Time: Older Kids

Ask kids to move apart from one another to minimize distractions. Encourage them to silently thank God for His gift of the Holy Spirit. Suggest they ask for courage to live and think as followers of Jesus and that they pray for family and friends too.

Word of Wonder

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid)

Help kids find Romans 12:2 in their Bibles.

"In our Word of Wonder we discover that we need to make choices that honor God, even when other people don't. The Holy Spirit gives us the courage to make wise choices!"

If using the NIV, tell kids they'll walk one direction as together they read aloud the first two sentences of the passage, stop as they read the third, then turn and walk the opposite direction as they read the last two sentences. They'll be showing how making the courageous choice to obey God may mean making some changes in how they live. (If using the NIV or another version, divide the verse into five phrases or sections and have kids follow the same instructions.) For an optional discussion, gather kids to talk about these questions:

- **Our Word of Wonder asks that we do more than just obey God—we're also to test (or understand) that what He wants is right. Why do you think it's important to understand God's will?**
- **In what ways are God's plans for you good, pleasing, and perfect?**

Word of Wonder Activity

Have groups stand facing you. Explain they'll be repeating the Word of Wonder after you, sentence by sentence or phrase by phrase. In the NIV, there are five sentences and, after each of the first four, they'll make a quarter turn to the left. By the fifth sentence they'll again be facing you. During the fifth sentence they'll lift their hands and praise God together as they affirm that His plan is good and pleasing and perfect! If using the NIV, they will do something similar, making a quarter turn after each phrase. The words are printed here, with each place kids will turn indicated.

Romans 12:2 (NIV):

Don't live the way this world lives. (quarter turn)

Let your way of thinking be completely changed. (quarter turn) Then you will be able to test what God wants for you. (quarter turn) And you will agree that what he wants is right. (quarter turn)

His plan is good and pleasing and perfect. (quarter turn)

This "Spin Cycle" activity is more fun—and memorable—if you dash around the room reading the first sentence from the front of the room, the second from the left side of the room, the third from the back of the room, and so on. After a rotation or two ask a willing reader to take your place—and pick up the pace.

Large Group!

Responding in Worship: Rocky Shoals

SUPPLIES: small stones (1 per kid)

RESOURCES: [Transformed Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

Leader Tip: Small, smooth river rocks—about an inch long—are inexpensive and available at landscaping businesses or big-box craft stores.

Gather kids together. Give each kid a small stone to hold.

"Paul's ship ran aground on a shoal, or a shallow area of hidden rocks, sand, and gravel. Those rocks were a surprise to the sailors—and without God's help, all the passengers could have lost their lives.

You may run into unexpected situations that are like rocky shoals too. You're sailing along in life and suddenly—wham! A friendship falls apart. Someone you love gets sick. Your parents start fighting. You have to move to a new town.

Ask kids to cup their hands in front of them, holding the stones in their open palms.

When that happens, all we might think about is the giant rock threatening to tear us apart. But here's what we can do: we can tell God what we're facing. We can tell Him how we're feeling. And we can ask God to fill us—through the Holy Spirit—with courage. Courage to have faith and to stay strong. Courage to trust that God has a good, perfect, and pleasing plan, even if we don't see what it is.

What's a rocky shoal you're facing right now? Maybe it's something that worries you or makes you afraid. Maybe it's something you wish would just go away—but it doesn't. In a moment, I'll play a song. While it's playing softly, close your eyes and tell God what's going on and how you feel about it. And then ask for the courage to face it, knowing He's with you through it all. When the song ends, I'll close in prayer.

Play "Who You Say I Am" from the [Transformed Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

Close this worship time by thanking God for the courage He gives, and for the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Praise Him for His ever-present love.

The stone you hold is yours to keep and carry in a pocket. Let it remind you that you don't have to fear rocky shoals. The God who loves you is bigger than any problem you face. And the Holy Spirit will give you courage!"

Optional Game: Fear Factory

SUPPLIES: paper (2 colors, optional)

Gather kids in the center of the room. Explain you'll give them a choice between two things that many people are afraid of. Their job is to decide which of the two things they're most afraid of, and they'll move to one side or the other of the room to indicate their decision. Then, at your signal, they'll return to the center of the room again.

As you present choices, indicate which side of the room represents each option. To crank up the fun, you can call out specific ways kids can move to their preferred side of the room: crab walk, hop, slide, slither, dance, skip, gallop, tiptoe, side step.

Choices might include the following: snakes/spiders, cockroaches/cough drops, being alone/being in a huge crowd, thunderstorms/blizzards, getting a shot/taking a test, barking dogs/hissing cats, high places/new places, totally dark rooms/loud noises, a dentist visit/an eye exam, getting hurt/hurting others, broccoli/eggplant, floodstornadoes, falling/floating a way, bats/rats, clowns/mosquitoes, otters/orangutans, scorpions/wasps, roller coasters/ice-skating, germs/gyms, being ignored/being the center of attention.

Leader Tip: Be sensitive to your kids' experience with fear. For example, if you live in an area that has just experienced a tornado, don't include one in your choices. If you have very young children, they probably haven't been on a roller coaster.

Make It Inclusive!

Modify this activity for kids with restricted mobility by giving each kid two sheets of paper of different colors. Indicate which color represents which fear choice, and have kids hold up the color that fits their choice

Gather kids together. **This quick visit to the Fear Factory proves there's no shortage of things that can prompt us to feel fearful. But when that spike of fear strikes, here's something you should know: We're not facing that roller coaster, broccoli, or scorpion alone.**

The Holy Spirit gives us courage, so even if we're feeling afraid, we can also be brave as we trust in God's power and protection."

Remember, today's Wonder Truth is THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVES US COURAGE.