

A Note to Wonderful Teachers

The purpose of this VBS is to teach the kids the wonderful creation of God and His plan for their lives. The operative word is teach. We want the kids to have a good time, and we want them to want to come back. However, if they have the best week of their life and learn nothing about God, we have failed in our task. Each day's lessons and activities have been carefully designed to work together to drive home that day's main point and application. The memory verse and songs all have been chosen to teach and reaffirm the basic truth for that day. When studying and teaching the lesson, it is imperative that the day's objective be kept firmly in the forefront of your thoughts. Look for ways throughout the day to restate and reaffirm that core truth. Don't be afraid to repeat it over and over again. The goal is to teach the kids God's truth. These lessons are not just Bible stories. They are avenues by which we communicate Divine truth.

As you prepare for this week, please spend much time in prayer and spend much time in study. Don't read the lesson until you have first read the Biblical passage. This year we are providing the outline of the story. All the major facts are included, but it is your job as a teacher to bring color and life to the basic structure we have provided. Read the outline with your Bible open. Study what God has said, and use the lesson as a tool to help you communicate God's Word to the kids. Don't wait until the day before to read and study the lesson. Start studying it as soon as you get the material. The week before, go through and review all the material for the week of VBS. Each night, review the lesson and material for the next day. Study to show yourself a workman that does not need to be ashamed.

The class time is designed solely to teach the lesson. Introductory songs, games, activity sheets and other such things have time allotted for them. You have 25 minutes in which to teach the Bible lesson. Use it all and use it wisely.

- Pray while preparing.
- Read the lesson from the Bible several times before teaching it.
- Study the provided lesson well in advance. Don't read it for the first time the morning of VBS!!!
- Know the daily objective and application for that lesson.
- Pray with the kids before teaching the lesson.
- Use your Bible while teaching the lesson. Read verses from your Bible while you teach the lesson. Make sure the kids clearly see what you are teaching is God's Word and not just a story.
- As you tell the story, make very clear what is Biblical fact and what are extra Biblical details used to enhance the account. Do not teach as fact what is not in Scripture!
- Be certain to apply the daily truth to the lives of the kids. Don't just tell a story!
- Be energetic. Make it interesting for the kids. Have fun.

Wonderful Tips for Wonderful Teaching

The lesson time is one of the most important parts of each days VBS. Your task is to transmit the Bible's truths to the children in a way that is both interesting and understanding. The point of this time is more than telling an interesting story; the point is transmitting Biblical truths to the minds and hearts of the kids. The lesson time is important:

- God's Word is the only source of heart transformation
- God's Word is the only means of purifying a life and protecting from sin
- God's Word is the only sufficient answer to *all* of life's problems

The most important thing you can do is pray for the Holy Spirit to convict and produce change in the heart of the children to whom you are ministering.

As you prepare for the week, read the pertinent Bible passage before reading each lesson. Make sure to spend time studying the lesson from the Bible. Your goal in teaching is to help the children understand Biblical concepts and help stimulate in them correct responses. Here are some tips to help you effectively study the lesson from the Bible.

1. Carefully observe the passage
 - a. What does the passage say?
 - b. Look for important facts
 - i. Characters (Who)
 - ii. Time (When)
 - iii. Places (Where)
 - c. Search for all the facts
 - d. Understand the meaning of the words used in the passage
 - e. Ask questions of the passage
 - i. What is being communicated?
 - ii. What are the important principles?
 - iii. How is God working in the lives of the people?
2. Comprehend the meaning of the passage
 - a. What does the passage mean?
 - b. What was God trying to teach the people in the passage?
 - c. Ask why questions.
 - d. Is the focus of the passage on salvation or spiritual growth?
 - e. Summarize the main teaching of the Bible passage into one sentence (this is the teacher's objective attached to each lesson).
3. Correctly apply the passage to the students
 - a. Seek for God's intended application from the passage. (What is God trying to teach us in this passage.)
 - b. Pray for wisdom to apply the passage to the children's particular circumstances. (Make direct application between the main teaching of the passage and specific circumstances in which the child can put that teaching into practice.)

- c. Remember, God's Word is the source and standard of all obedience.
 - d. Understand and keep in clear focus the lesson's daily objective.
 - e. Be clear and personal in the application of the lesson.
 - f. Challenge the children to remember and apply the application at home.
4. Communicate the lesson in a fashion that will keep the children's attention.
- a. Do not seek to manipulate. Instruct the students and call to obedience. Let the Holy Spirit work.
 - b. Know the story well.
 - c. Tell the story clearly and in chronological order.
 - d. Be careful not to distract from the story by mentioning unrelated topics or situations.
 - e. Create movement and action in the story by using verbs.
 - f. Do not speak in a monotone; use your voice to convey the action of the story.
 - g. Practice telling the Bible story before an imaginary audience.
 - h. Speak clearly and be enthusiastic.
 - i. Look directly into the children's eyes.

Giving a Wonderful Invitation

One of the primary functions of this VBS is to clearly present the gospel to children and in doing so to give them an opportunity to obey God's call to trust Christ. The invitation time is specially set aside for the purpose of helping boys and girls understand and take the step of obedience in calling upon Christ as their Savior. Below are some tips to help guide you as you lead this most important of times within your class time:

- Pray. You cannot change their hearts, only God can.
- Be brief. Spend no more than two or three minutes in this time.
- Never pressure the children to receive Christ.
- Do not use superficial questions like "Do you want to go to heaven" or "Who wants to be a child of God?"
- Do not give instructions that may lead the child to think by doing an action he is receiving Christ. "If you want to receive Christ, raise your hand."
- Instead give the child very specific instructions. "If you would like to talk to someone about receiving Christ, please slip quietly to the back. We have some helpers available who would love to talk to you." Make sure to give specific instructions that work for you in your class.
- Remember, Satan is the child's enemy and does not want him to receive Christ as Savior. He will attack during the invitation.

When giving the invitation:

1. Review the problem of sin and the solution of the person and work of Christ.
2. Use a verse to reinforce the promise and invitation of salvation, such as Romans 10:9.
3. Ask the children to close their eyes and bow their heads.
4. Invite the child to show his desire to receive Christ. Explain the seriousness of the decision and give him an opportunity to respond. ("Open your eyes and look at me" or "Go to the back and talk to _____") Be sure to let the child know why you want to meet them. "I will bring my Bible and show you how you can receive the Lord Jesus as your Savior today."
5. When a child responds, ask them why they want to talk with you. Some may respond for other reasons than for salvation. If they have some other desire than salvation, take care of their need and then send them back to the group. Don't try to pressure them into praying a prayer with you.
6. Counsel personally the children who respond for salvation, preferably away from the group and other distractions.

Wonderful Memory Verse Time

Philosophy:

We want the kids to learn God's Word. They are capable of implanting it in their hearts. While some may learn and quote verses more rapidly than others, they can all learn God's Word. The goal is to help instill into their hearts God's truths. They will not get this if the teacher helps them over every other word, or lets them look up from the sheet to rattle off the verse while it is still fresh in their minds. They need to study and be able to say the verse without assistance from the teacher and without rattling off the words they just read. As time allows, take opportunities to explain God's truth, so they have the meaning in their minds as well as the words.

The goal of this time is not to have the kids sitting quietly, waiting patiently for one another to whisper the verse to their teacher. The goal of this time is to help the kids engage with the verse. If done well, this time will probably be noisy with kids memorizing verses, helping one another, teachers listening, instructing and helping the kids learn. If you are familiar at all with AWANA's handbook time, this verse time is intended to look something like that. Please, don't make this a miserable time of drudgery that the kids dread. Because every child learns differently and at different rates, verse related activities are provided to keep the children active and still engaged with the memory verse. This time is intended to be a fun time in which the children enjoy learning the Word of God. Help them enjoy learning God's Word!

Some tips to help make memory verse time wonderful are:

- ★ Have a high student to teacher ratio (one worker for every 2-3 kids).
- ★ Break the classes into smaller groups.
- ★ Actively help the kids learn their verse.
- ★ Give high praise to every child who says a verse, not just the ones who say lots of verses.
- ★ Encourage, but do not force, all of them to learn the daily verse.
- ★ If time allows ask the kids, "Do you know what that verse means?"
- ★ Don't be afraid to tell the kids to go study some more. Make sure they know the verse.
- ★ Give opportunity for all kids who want to say verses to say them. Don't let the stars monopolize your time.

Basic rules for memory verse time:

- **Each verse must be said word perfect, without any help.** (They can do this, hundreds of kids have done dozens of verses in a single week, all word perfect.)
- Some children do not have the ability to read and study the verses by themselves. If they want to say the verse, make sure that someone is available to help them learn the verse if they are unable to learn it on their own.
- Help the kids understand the truths they are quoting.
- Make sure the child knows the verse and is not just repeating it after you.
- Be fair with the kids. Don't give extra helps and don't play favorites.
- Be a good encourager. Give verbal encouragement to the kids. "You're doing great" "Keep up the good work" "Great job"

Paul's Call to Serve

Acts 9:1-20

Objective:

Teach the children they must serve God personally, purely and pleasing to Him.

Key Definition:

Service- Doing whatever God tells me, immediately and without complaint

Memory Verse:

Romans 12:1

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

Introduction:

(Loudly) "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge!" Those were the last words that Stephen spoke before he died. All he had done was preach! He told those listening that Jesus was the Messiah, Jesus was God come to earth to His people from their sins. And the people listening hated Stephen for telling them this. They wanted to hurt Stephen for telling them this. Saul was one man there. Saul hated everyone who believed in Jesus.

1. Saul was persecuting the church (**Visual 1-Paul Persecuting Church**)
 - a. He was threatening the church
 - b. He went to Damascus to imprison believers

2. Saul was stopped by Jesus
 - a. While traveling, a bright light shone out of heaven (**Visual 2-Bright Light**)
 - b. Paul heard a voice speaking to him
 - c. The voice announced it was Jesus, the same one Paul was persecuting
 - d. Paul asked what Jesus would have him do

3. Saul went into Damascus
 - a. The men with him heard the voice
 - b. Saul was blind (**Visual 3-Saul Blind**)
Have students cover their eyes with their hands to see what it was like for Saul.
 - c. He was led into Damascus
 - d. He spent three days in Damascus, without eating or drinking anything
 - e. Saul was still blind

4. God sent another servant
 - a. Ananias lived in Damascus
 - b. God told Ananias to go to Saul
 - c. Ananias was hesitant to go
 - d. God told Ananias He had a plan for Saul to serve Him (**Visual 4-Serve Application**)

God had a plan for Saul to serve Him. Saul, who hated Jesus, was now supposed to serve Him! God had created Saul to serve Him. God has created me to serve Him to. He wants everyone who believe on Him to serve Him.

Read from the Bible today's memory verse, Romans 12:1, and explain how the verse teaches we need to serve God. (Visual 5-Memory Verse)

God created me to serve Him (Go back and forth between the memory verse visual and the serve application visual as you teach these points. Each aspect will then be reiterated and stressed.)

- ▶ *Personally for God (present your bodies) (Visual 5-Memory Verse)
God created us to serve Him ourselves. It's very good that other people are serving Him. It's great if we encourage and help others serve God, but that's not enough. God wants us to serve Him ourselves. He wants you to use your hands, your feet, your mouths and your abilities to serve Him yourself. (Visual 4-Serve Application)*
- ▶ *Pure before God (holy) (Visual 5-Memory Verse)
The Bible teaches us that God is a perfect God. He doesn't like anything that is filled with sin. That is why we each must ask Jesus to forgive our sins. It is also why we must be careful to make sure we are serving God in a way that is right. Does anyone know what pure mean? Pure is something that doesn't have anything in it that it's not supposed to have. That means when we serve God purely, we don't mix sin in with our service. We try to do what is right while we are serving God. It's not right to disobey your parents because you were trying to do something for God. It's not right to scream at your sister and then go to church. You need to go to church, but you need to first apologize to your sister for being mean. God wants you to serve Him purely. (Visual 4-Serve Application)*
- ▶ *Pleasing to God (acceptable) (Visual 5-Memory Verse)
When we serve God personally, and we serve God purely, then that is something that pleases God. God created us for His pleasure (Rev. 4:11). That means the most important thing in everything we do is whether or not God likes what we're doing. (Visual 4-Serve Visual)*

God created me to serve Him just as He created Saul to serve Him.

5. Ananias went to Saul
 - a. He told Saul Jesus had sent him
 - b. He healed Saul of his blindness
 - c. Saul was believed Jesus and was baptized (**Visual 6-Paul Growing**)
 - d. Saul joined with the believers in Damascus
 - e. Saul began preaching Jesus to the unsaved

As you close take a couple minutes to reiterate (not reteach) the application, making it specific to the lives of the children you are teaching.

Application: (Visual 4-Serve Visual)

I must serve God personally, purely and pleasing to Him.

Paul Challenge to Worship God

Acts 14:6-18

Objective:

Teach that we each must worship God with all we do, with all our heart and all for Him.

Key Definition

Worship- making God most important in every part of my life

Memory Verse:

Colossians 3:23

And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;

Introduction:

What is a missionary? Do you know any missionaries?

The Bible tells us about two men who were missionaries. Their names were Barnabas and Paul, and they traveled all over the world.

1. Paul and Barnabas go to Lystra (**Visual 1-Map of Lystra**)
2. They heal a man (**Visual 2-Healing lame man**)
 - a. Crippled from birth (never walked)
 - b. Paul commanded him to stand up
 - c. The man jumped up and walked around
Have the kids stand up and jump
3. The people worshiped Paul and Barnabas
 - a. They thought the gods had come down
 - b. They thought Barnabas was the chief god (**Visual 3-Jupiter or Zeus**)
 - c. They thought Paul was his messenger (**Visual 4-Mercury or Hermes**)
 - d. The temple priests brought oxen and wreaths to celebrate the presence of the gods
 - e. They wanted to make sacrifice with the people

Talk about idolatry. Tell how the Greeks worshiped all kinds of gods. But God commands us to only worship Him. (Visual 5-Worship Visual)

Paul and Barnabas could have gotten a lot out of this arrangement. They might have received gifts and fame. People would have praised them and wanted to serve them. However, Paul and Barnabas knew that God was the only One who should be worshiped.

Read from the Bible today's memory verse, Colossians 3:23, and explain how the verse teaches we need to worship God. (Visual 6-Memory Verse Visual)

God created me to worship Him (Go back and forth between the Verse Visual and the Worship Visual)

- ▶ *All I do (whatsoever ye do)(Visual 6-Memory Verse Visual)
God wants us to worship Him in everything we do. Worship is far more than just going to church, reading our Bibles and praying. Worship is making God most important. That means homework, chores, bedtime and everything else we do is to be an act of worship. How do you think we worship God in these things. (Select an example, like*

homework, and have the kids discuss how they can worship God in that activity. We do these things as an act of worship by doing them in obedience to the Bible- diligently, faithfully, industriously, etc.- and for God's pleasure). All I do can and should be done with God as most important. (Visual 5-Worship Visual)

- ▶ *All my heart (do it heartily)(Visual 6-Memory Verse Visual)
Sometimes people think that we worship God if we just do the right things, regardless of what is in our hearts. That's not true worship. God wants our actions to come from a heart that wants to worship Him. So when we do our homework carefully and honestly (or whatever example you discussed above), we don't just do it to keep from getting in trouble. We do it because in our hearts we want God to be pleased. (Visual 5-Worship Visual)*
- ▶ *All for Him (as to the Lord)(Visual 6-Memory Verse Visual)
If we are going to worship God in everything we do, we will be worried most about what God thinks about what we are doing. If God is really most important in all we do, then we are going to want Him to look at our actions and be pleased with them. Many times we start paying more attention to what friends or classmates think about our actions. We are to do everything for the Lord, and not for men. (Visual 5-Worship Visual)*

Paul and Barnabas knew that we should only worship God; however, the people of Lystra were getting ready to make sacrifices to worship Paul and Barnabas!

4. Paul and Barnabas stopped them (*Visual 7-Paul talking to worshippers*)
 - a. They tore their clothes and ran to the crowd
 - b. "We're men just like you!"
 - c. They told the crowd about God (*Visual 8-Hands holding Sun*)
 - i. He's alive
 - ii. He is the Creator
 - iii. He is patient
 - iv. He is good
 - d. They barely kept the people from worshipping them

As you close take a couple minutes to reiterate (not reteach) the application, making it specific to the lives of the children you are teaching.

Application: (Visual 5-Worship Visual)

God created me to worship Him in all I do, with all my heart and all for Him.

Paul's Commitment to Trust God

Acts 21:10-14

Objective:

Teach the kids to depend on God in everything they do and for strength to obey Him.

Key Definition:

Depend- placing my total confidence in God and His Word.

Memory verse:

Philippians 4:13

"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

Material Needed:

- A globe or large map
- A sash or belt

Introduction:

Here's a globe (or a map, if a globe is unavailable). It shows the whole world. Here's where we are. If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go? (**Point to the places on the map as kids mention them.**) We've been talking about Paul this week. He traveled a lot. When Paul grew up, he lived right here in Israel. Because Paul was an apostle who lived before all of the Bible was written, he had a very special relationship with God. He had a relationship with God that no one alive today has. God talked directly so Paul could hear God. One day God told Paul to go to Jerusalem.

1. Paul was traveling to Jerusalem (**Visual 1-Map of Caesarea and region**)
 - a. God had told him to go to Jerusalem
 - b. On the way he stopped in a town called Caesarea
2. Agabus prophesied about Paul
Agabus acted out this prophecy. Call on a child to help you act out this prophecy. (Don't tie the child up, let them wrap a sash or belt around your wrists).
 - a. A prophet named Agabus came up from Judea
 - b. He tied himself up with Paul's belt (**Visual 2-Prophet Tied Up**)
 - c. He prophesied what would happen if Paul went to Jerusalem
3. Agabus' prophesy
 - a. Paul would be put in chains (**Visual 3-Paul in Chains**)
 - b. He would be given to the Romans
 - c. The people pled with Paul not to go to Jerusalem (**Visual 4-People pleading with Paul**)

This sounded horrible to Paul! To be tied up and put in prison for telling others about God! Yet God Himself had told Paul to go to Jerusalem. Paul knew that things could go very bad in

Jerusalem, but Paul also knew that he had to trust God. What God said to do was best. In our lives too, some things that God asks us to do are not easy. Can you think of some things that God asks us to do in the Bible that are not easy (love your enemies, be kind, obey your parents, and other examples from the Bible). We can't do these things without God's help. We have to depend on Him. **(Visual 5-Depend Visual)**

Read from the Bible today's memory verse, Phillipians 4:13, and explain how the verse teaches we need to depend on God. (Visual 6-Memory Verse Visual)

God created me to depend on Him: (Go back and forth between the memory verse visual and the serve visual)

- Depend in everything **(I can do all things)** **(Visual 6-Memory Verse Visual)**
Any thing God commands us to do, He will give us the ability to do. This verse does not teach we can run faster than our friends, or score the winning goal. This verse teaches that God will give us the strength to do everything that He wants us to do. I can serve and worship God in every part of my life when I depend on Him to help me. **(Visual 5-Depend Visual)**
- Depend for strength **(Christ which strengtheneth me)** **(Visual 6-Memory Verse Visual)**
This strength is not mine. It comes from Christ. God does not want us to make ourselves better. He wants us to obey Him and depend on Him to help us do what He tells us to do. This verse is a wonderful promise, that God will give us the strength we need. Just like Paul, we are going to have to do some very difficult things in our lives. Just like Paul, we can depend on God to give us the strength we need to serve and worship Him. **(Visual 5-Depend Visual)**

We can't do all the things God asks us to do unless we depend on God. Paul couldn't do the things God asked him to do, especially to go to jail in Jerusalem, unless he depended on God.

4. Paul's response **(Visual 7-Paul Speaking to the People)**
 - a. Why do you cry and break my heart?
 - b. I am ready to be bound, and even to die for Jesus
 - c. The people tried to convince him not to go
 - d. The people finally stopped trying
 - e. They all trusted God, "The will of the Lord be done."

As you close take a couple minutes to reiterate (not reteach) the application, making it specific to the lives of the children you are teaching.

Application: (Visual 5-Depend Visual)

You and I need to depend on God in everything we do and for strength to obey Him.

Paul's Confession of Salvation

Acts 26:1-29

Objective:

Teach each child he must personally agree with God about Christ and believe Him with all his heart.

Key Definition:

Believe- accepting God's Word as real and true so that it changes the way I think and how I live

Memory Verse:

Romans 10:9

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

Introduction:

(There is not a lot of physical drama in this lesson. Make it exciting through the wonder of what is happening, what people around may be thinking. Be careful not to tell imaginative thoughts as Biblical truth. Use phrases like, "People may have thought . . ." or "What might Agrippa have thought as . . ." Be very clear what is fact from the passage and what is imagination, but use some imagination as you build the scene for the kids.) *What might someone do today that might get them arrested? (Allow time for children's response.) Remember the prophet we talked about yesterday? What he had prophesied had come true. Paul was arrested! And he hadn't robbed a bank or stolen from a store or (use some of the responses from the kids from a moment ago). All Paul had done was believe in Jesus and tell other about Him. Think of where Paul is right now. He is in the audience room of the palace. And here comes the King, Agrippa, the queen, Bernice, the governor, Festus, and many other very important men. The Bible tells us that they all came in with great show. You can imagine them in their fine purple robes, circlets of gold on their heads. All the pride of royalty in their faces and in the way they walked. They sat down ready to be entertained by this strange man Paul that they've heard of. Then they call Paul in. Here comes Paul without any of the show the others had. The Bible doesn't tell us exactly what he looked like, but some historians have said he wasn't a very handsome man. Now here he is in chains and wearing a simple prison tunic. But there was something different about Paul. The Holy Spirit was with Paul. And Paul, though not much to look at, spoke truths from the mouth of God.*

1. Paul was imprisoned, as the prophet said
2. Paul spoke before Agrippa (**Visual 1-Paul in chains before Agrippa**)
 - a. Agrippa was the Roman governor in charge of Jerusalem (He was related to the Herod who tried to kill Jesus and the Herod who killed James)
 - b. Agrippa was very knowledgeable in the Jewish customs and culture
 - c. Paul announced he was being judged for his belief in the Messiah
 - d. Paul was being judged because He believe Jesus rose from the dead

3. Paul's testimony (**Visual 2-Paul persecuting Christians**)
 - a. He was persecuting and killing Christians
 - b. He went to Damascus to continue persecuting
Saul had a problem. His problem was sin. We have the same problem. We might not run around hurting and killing people, but we are born with the same want to do wrong. We are all born with sin in our hearts. This sin keeps us from God. God is perfectly holy, He never does anything wrong and He always does everything right, and God cannot be friends with anyone who is not perfectly holy. Because of our sin, we cannot be friends with God. Because of his sin, Paul could not be friends with God.
 - c. Jesus stopped him on the road

4. Jesus instructed Paul
 - a. His ministry- preach the gospel to the Gentiles
 - b. The gospel a.(Have the students stand and help you with acting out these truths) (**Visual 3-Collage Slide**) (Go through the whole list a couple of time. Then teach individually the next two visuals)
 - i. Open eyes (Cover eyes and then take hands away.)
 - ii. Turn from darkness to light (Turn one direction and then the other) (**Visual 4-Darkness to Light**)
 - iii. Turn from the power of Satan unto God (Repeat same action as above)
 - iv. Receive forgiveness of sins (Draw heart on chest) (**Visual 5-Clean Heart**)
 - v. Receive eternal life (Point to Heaven)

5. Paul's ministry
 - a. He obeyed God's commands
 - b. He was persecuted by the Jew because of his obedience

6. Paul's witness (**Visual 6-Cross, Tomb, Light of the World**)
 - a. Christ suffered (He never did anything wrong that needed to be punished. He willingly went to the cross, suffered and died so that we could be forgiven.)
 - b. Christ rose from the dead (He didn't stay dead. Jesus came back to life three days after He had died!)
 - c. Christ is light to the world (If you have not believed in God, God wants you to believe. He wants you to turn from darkness and to the light. If you have believed God, He wants you to have the boldness of Paul, to tell others of Christ.)

Read from the Bible today's memory verse, Romans 10:9, and explain how the verse teaches we need to serve God. (Visual 7-Memory Verse)

God created me to believe Him: (Go back and forth between the memory verse and the believe visual)

- i. **Agree with God about Christ (Confess) (Visual 7-Memory Verse)**
The story that Paul told Agrippa about Jesus is an amazing story! It's not make believe. What Paul told about is the absolute truth. That's great news! That means

that because Jesus suffered, dead and rose from the dead I can have eternal life. The Bible tells us that this eternal life is a free gift from God. I can not do anything to pay for it. I do not have to do anything to pay for it. God tells me in His Word that I receive eternal life confession and believing. Confession is agreeing with God about Jesus. God tells us that Jesus is His Son, that Jesus is the only One who can forgive our sin, that Jesus was punished for our sin, that Jesus died, came back to life and is now in Heaven with God. To have eternal life I must be in complete agreement with God about His Son. (Visual 8-Believe Visual)

- *Believe in your heart (believe in thine heart) (Visual 7-Memory Verse)*
I must also believe that Jesus is exactly who God says He is. Believing is being so sure Jesus is who God says He is that I change my mind to think like God about Jesus and I change my life to obey what God says I must do in response to Jesus. What God says I must do (Do's a bad word, find a better one) is to trust only Jesus for forgiveness and then to ask Him to forgive me. (Visual 8-Believe Visual)

7. The leaders response (*Visual 9-Paul Mocked*)

- a. Festus made fun of Paul
- b. Agrippa was almost convinced

These two men responded differently to Paul, but neither one responded as God wants them. God expects us to obey Him, trusting Jesus to forgive our sin. Will you obey God today and ask Jesus to forgive your sin?

Give an invitation

As you close take a couple minutes to reiterate (not reteach) the application, making it specific to the lives of the children you are teaching.

Application: (Visual 8-Believe Application)

I must agree with God about Christ and believe Him with all my heart.

Paul's Choice to Obey

Acts 27:1-44

Objective:

Teach the importance of knowing and keeping God's plan.

Key Definition:

Follow- doing what God tells me to do no matter what

Memory Verse:

Ephesians 5:17

Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.

Materials Needed:

- Paper lunch sack
- Gummy worms (one for each student)
- Picture or model of a boat with sails

Introduction:

I have some worms here in this bag (have prepared a brown paper lunch sack with some gummy worms in the sack). I have heard that in some areas of the world these worms are a treat to eat. They look kind of slimy to me, but I wonder if any of you would be brave enough to eat a worm from this bag. We'll dig one out for you and let you eat it. Would anyone like to volunteer to eat a worm? (Allow the children to respond. Let one brave child come up, find a worm in the bag and see that it is indeed a treat.) Wow! It's really a gummy worm! Would any one else like to eat a worm now? (Pass out a gummy worm to each remaining child.) I had a plan, and some of you may have guessed my plan, but others of you may have thought I really wanted you to do something that might have hurt you. Sometimes we can feel that way about God's plans. We read in the Bible that God wants us to do something or think in some way, and we really wonder if that plan that God has is really good. Paul knew much about the plan of God. Today we're going to see that God's plans for Paul weren't always easy, but they were always best.

1. Paul was shipped to Rome for trial (**Visual 1-Chart of Trip**)
 - a. The trip was not easy (**Visual 2-Picture of Boat**)
These were small boats, powered by sails. Have a picture or model of a boat with sails to use as you teach the lesson.
 - b. They finally reached a place call the Fair Havens
 - c. Paul warned them that they were going to have trouble
 - d. The captain decided to go anyway
Maybe the captain looked at Paul and wondered what in the world Paul thought he knew about sailing. The captain's whole life was the sea, and Paul was just a teacher. What could Paul know about their trip? But Paul knew God's plan. He knew that the trip was not going to be easy. The captain, however, did not know

God's plan and did not want to know God's plan. He wanted to go ahead and sail. Paul knew God's plans, but the captain did not want to listen or follow.

2. They set sail again
 - a. The wind blew gently the right way
 - b. They left and headed north
 - c. Soon a vicious wind caught the ship (**Visual 3-Boat in a Storm**)
(Pick the picture up and rock it like it's in a storm. Have the kids either blow like the wind at the picture)

3. The storm
 - a. The ship was in great danger
 - b. They threw out their cargo
(Have the kids mimic you in throwing the cargo over the side of the boat)
 - c. Then they threw out the tackling (spare stuff to help run the ship)
 - d. They couldn't see the skies for many days
(Have the kids put up their hands like they are shielding their eyes and looking for the sky)
 - e. They thought they were all going to die
This was terrible! Even the captain, who had probably sailed through many other storms, thought they were going to die! If only he had listened earlier to Paul telling him of God's plan. God's plan is always best. I must follow it. Can you remember that and say it with me? (Have the kids repeat the phrase "God's plan is always best. I must know and keep it." with you.) Staying in Crete would have been difficult for the captain, but now they were all on the ship in the middle of a terrible storm. They must have all been very scared. But Paul had learned God's plan and was going to share it with the others.

4. Paul's words (**Visual 4-Paul speaking to Men**)
 - a. Be of good cheer
 - b. He told them God had promised they would all live
 - c. He told them God said they would be stranded on an island
 - d. Two weeks later they came close to land
 - e. The sailors were ready to jump overboard to try and swim to land.
 - f. Paul told the men that unless they stayed in the boat they would not be saved.

Read from the Bible today's memory verse, Ephesians 5:17, and explain how the verse teaches we need to depend on God. (Visual 5-Memory Verse Visual)

God created me to obey Him: (Go back and forth between verse and visual)

- ***Know God's plan (Be not unwise) (Visual 5-Memory Verse Visual)***

Sometimes we're like the captain. We hear God's plan found in the Bible, but we don't really believe that's what God wants us to do. Maybe we listen to other people who tell

us a different way than God's plan. That way may sound easier or better, so we do what they say rather than what God says. Sometimes we don't even bother to try and find out what God's plan for us is. Not knowing or not following God's plan is not good. God loves us and has laid out a plan for our lives that is best for us. For our good, and so we can say, "Wow, God! You're really great!" (Visual 6-Follow Visual)

- *Keep God's plan (but understanding what the will of the Lord is) (Visual 5-Memory Verse Visual)*

It isn't enough just to know God's plan. I have to obey God's plan. Our memory verse tells us to understand the Lord's will. Understanding is more than just knowing what God wants you to do. Understanding is knowing God's will, and doing it.

Understanding is keeping God's will. God's first plan for you is to pray to Him and ask Him to forgive your sin. We're all born with the want to do wrong, and because of that we can't be friends with God. But John 3:16 tells us that God has a great plan! (Read John 3:16) God the Son, Jesus, came to earth and died so that I could have everlasting life. I can be forgiven and now be friends with God! But I can't just have my sins forgiven any old way. There's only one plan that God has, and that plan is to believe on Jesus and ask Him to forgive your sins. If you've never done that, at the end of the lesson one of the other helpers or I would love to talk to you. We would love to tell you more about God's plan to be saved. If you have asked Jesus to forgive your sins, God still has a plan for your life. He has a plan if your brother or sister is irritating you. God's plan that He tells us in the Bible is that we be kind to each other. Have you ignored God's plan before and yelled at or even hurt your brother or sister? Sometimes your parents don't catch you, but other times they do. And then you're in trouble. Say our phrase with me. "God's plan is always best. I must follow it." Maybe at home you decided to watch TV instead of study for a test. God's plan that He tells us in the Bible is that we work hard at the jobs we need to do. The next day at school at test time, you find you're in trouble because you didn't follow God's plan. Say it with me again. "God's plan is always best. I must follow it." Can you think of any other time when it might be hard to follow God's plan? (Allow time for response.) (Visual 6-Follow Visual)

Even though there are times when it is hard to obey God's plan, we should be like Paul and keep God's plan.

5. Paul's obedience (*Visual 4-Paul Speaking to Men*)
 - a. He told the soldiers if the men jumped overboard they would not be saved
 - b. He encouraged them to eat something
 - c. They threw more stuff overboard
 - d. They sailed toward the land
 - e. The ship broke apart
 - f. The soldiers wanted to kill the prisoners
 - g. The centurion (chief of the soldiers) stopped them
 - h. They all jumped in to swim for land
6. Everyone made it safely to the land (Melita) (*Visual 7-Everyone on the Island*)

As you close take a couple minutes to reiterate (not reteach) the application, making it specific to the lives of the children you are teaching.

They listened to God's plan and obeyed God's plan. It must have been difficult for some of them to see land and still have to wait before getting there. But they all followed God's plan, and they were all saved. Let's remember our phrase together again. "God's plan is always best. I must know and keep it."

Application: (Visual 6-Follow Visual)

I must know and keep God's plan.

