

PPT Title

Shipwrecked

Main Point: God has a plan for each of us.

Key Verse: *But the Lord said to Ananias, "Go! I have chosen this man to work for Me. He will carry My name to those who aren't Jews and to their kings. He will bring My name to the people of Israel." - Acts 9:15*

Prop: yarmulke, baseball cap, crown, large rubber snake (hidden out of students' sight)

BACKGROUND/REVIEW



Say: Last week, we read about Paul and Silas being thrown into jail for casting an evil spirit out of a slave girl. They were put in chains, and locked in a cell at the heart of the prison. But Paul and Silas did not complain. Instead, they PRAYED and PRAISED God. Because they had faith in God, and they had God's Holy Spirit living inside of them, their joy flowed out. In the middle of the night, the jail keeper and the other prisoners heard their songs of praise. The praises of Paul and Silas invited God's power in the situation! Suddenly, the ground began to tremble. God sent an earthquake to break their chains, and open the prison doors!



Paul and Silas could have run for their lives, but they stayed right there in the prison. They did exactly what God's Spirit told them to do. They told the jail keeper how to be SET FREE from his sin. They told him to put his trust in Jesus. That very night, the jailer and his entire family put their trust in Jesus, and entered the kingdom of heaven.

When you are faced with a difficult situation, remember that your praise invites God's power into any situation!

GOD'S PLAN FOR PAUL



Say: God had a very specific plan for Paul. God announced this plan way, way back when Paul was still Saul, traveling on the road to Damascus. Right after Jesus appeared to Saul, and Saul lost his sight, the Lord spoke to a believer named Ananias. Read along in Acts 9:15.

But the Lord said to Ananias, "Go! I have chosen this man to work for Me. He will carry My name to those who aren't Jews and to their kings. He will bring My name to the people of Israel." - Acts 9:15

Ask: In God's plan, who are the **three** people groups that Paul would speak to? *Those who aren't Jews (Put on baseball cap), their kings (Put on crown), and the Israelites also known as Jews (Put on yarmulke).* **Say:** So this was God's plan for Saul.

Psalm 33:11 says, "But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever. What He wants to do will last for all time." **Ask:** God's plans stand how long? *Forever!* Can anything stop God's plan? *No!* Can any **person** stop God's plan? *No.* Well, what about a **hurricane**? Could a hurricane stop God's plan? *No.* Today we'll see what God can do with a hurricane! Can the **devil** stop God's plan? *No.* **Say:** The devil will try and try to stop God's plan,

but he is powerless to stop God! Listen today to see how many times the devil tries to stop God's plan.

Say: When Paul first put His trust in Jesus, he began preaching to the Jews in and around Jerusalem. **Put on yarmulke.** Then God sent him out on a mission trip, to speak in other cities to people who were not Jews. **Put on baseball cap.** So there are two of the groups mentioned in God's plan. What group is left? *Their kings.* **Put on crown.**

Well, the king of Rome was not exactly sending out invitations to preachers who followed Jesus. Let's see how God will accomplish His amazing plan for Paul.

PAUL'S MISSIONARY JOURNEYS



At this time, the Roman government ruled all over the area. **Teacher: Refer to map.** We call it the "Roman Empire." It included much of what are now Europe and the Middle East. Even Judea, the Jewish Promised Land, was ruled by the Romans. The Romans called their most important ruler "Caesar."

Paul traveled to so many cities to preach about Jesus. He performed many miracles to prove that what he said was true. At one point, handkerchiefs that touched Paul were carried to sick people and they were healed! (Acts 19:11-12). Paul even raised someone from the dead (Acts 20:9-10). Everywhere Paul traveled and preached, people trusted in Jesus and received new life (Acts 19:18).

We learned about Paul's trips with Barnabas, and Silas and Timothy. Later, he went to cities like Thessalonica, Corinth, and Ephesus. Do these cities sound familiar? Paul wrote letters to the believers in these cities. Those letters are in your Bible! They are Thessalonians, Corinthians, and Ephesus. In all, God sent Paul on three big missionary trips.

THE ARREST OF PAUL (Acts 21)

At the end of his third trip, God sent a message to Paul. Luke is the author of Acts. Luke was with Paul during this time. He said:

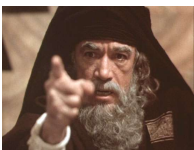


A prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. He came over to us. Then he took Paul's belt and tied his own hands and feet with it. He said, "The Holy Spirit says, 'This is how the Jews of Jerusalem will tie up the owner of this belt. They will hand him over to people who are not Jews.' "

When we heard this, we all begged Paul not to go up to Jerusalem. He asked, "Why are you crying? Why are you breaking my heart? I'm ready to be put in prison. In fact, I'm ready to die in Jerusalem for the Lord Jesus." We couldn't change his mind. So we gave up. We said, "May what the Lord wants to happen be done."

After this, we got ready and went up to Jerusalem. - Acts 21:10b-15

God told Paul and his friends what was about to happen to Paul. Paul was not afraid. He knew that God was in control of ALL things, and God would never leave him. Paul willingly went to Jerusalem so that God's plan would be carried out.



Jerusalem was the capital city of the Jewish people. Paul went to the Temple there. Some men lied about him, saying that Paul was teaching people to turn against the Jews. This was not true! Paul was teaching people that Jesus was the Savior that God had promised to send to save His people. The angry crowd gabbled Paul and began hitting him. They were about to kill him. But just then, a Roman commander came and stopped the crowd from beating Paul. The commander arrested Paul and started to lead him to jail.



On his own, Paul might have kept his mouth closed and left with the commander. **But Paul was not on his own! He was full of the Holy Spirit!** He asked the commander to let him speak to the crowd. Just imagine Paul, in chains, with a guard on each side of him as he began to preach to the very people who tried to kill him (Acts 21:33). He boldly told them the good news of Jesus, but they became angry when he said that non-Jewish people could also be saved.

The Roman commander took Paul away from the crowd. Since Paul had been born in a Roman town, he was given a Roman trial. Paul was on trial in front of the commander. The Jewish leaders complained against Paul, and wanted Paul to be killed (Acts 28:18). But the Roman commander knew he had not committed a crime. The commander kept Paul in jail.

The next night the Lord stood near Paul. He said, "Be brave! You have given witness about me in Jerusalem. You must do the same in Rome." - Acts 23:11

Application: God was with Paul, even in his jail cell! You may have to go through a difficult situation, but you are never alone. God is always with you!

Say: Paul was kept in jail for two entire years! He faced many trials, but no one could ever prove that he had broken a law. During his time in jail, he told his story to a commander, two governors, their wives, and a King. **Put on crown.** Do you see how Paul is finally telling the gospel to the "kings" of the non-Jewish people?



Finally, Paul asked to tell his story to Caesar. The Governor agreed to send Paul to Caesar in Rome. Here's where our story gets really interesting!

SHIPWRECKED (Acts 27)



A kind Roman soldier named Julius was put in charge of Paul and some other prisoners. They got on a ship and sailed to Sidon, then passed Cyprus to Lycia. **Refer to map.** The sea was getting windy (Acts 27:4). At Lycia, the small group of prisoners joined other passengers on a big ship heading to Italy. There were 276 passengers in all. The ship was from Egypt. It was carrying wheat to Italy. By now, the wind was really getting strong, and it was difficult to sail in that weather. Finally, the ship came to Fair Havens, near Lasea. It was getting to be wintertime. The sea was stormy, and sailing had become dangerous. Most ships did not sail during these months; they just stayed in one port until the winter passed.

So Paul gave them a warning. "Men," he said, "I can see that our trip is going to be dangerous. The ship and everything in it will be lost. Our own lives will be in danger also."



But the commander didn't listen to what Paul said. Instead, he followed the advice of the pilot and the ship's owner. - Acts 27:9c-11

Julius and the ship's captain wanted to sail on, to get to the next port. They followed their own wisdom, instead of the wisdom of God that was spoken through Paul. They should have listened to Paul, because only God knows the future.



So the ship set sail. As they came near the next port, a storm with hurricane force winds and rain came. Because of the great winds, the crew could not sail the ship to the port. The large ship was driven out to the open sea.



We took a very bad beating from the storm. The next day the crew began to throw the ship's contents overboard. On the third day, they even threw the ship's gear overboard with their own hands. The sun and stars didn't appear for many days. The storm was terrible. So we gave up all hope of being saved. - Acts 27:18

Keep in mind, that back then there was no equipment to help them find their way. The sailors depended on the stars in the night sky to help direct them. But the sky had been covered in thick clouds for days. So they didn't know where they were, or where they were going. These people were completely helpless.

Application: When you are completely helpless, God is NOT! All things are possible with God (Matthew 19:26). And when God does the impossible, He gets the glory that only He deserves (2 Corinthians 12:8-10).

Say: God gave a special message to Paul, and he shared it with the other passengers.



Paul said: *"Now I beg you to be brave. Not one of you will die. Only the ship will be destroyed. I belong to God and serve Him. Last night His angel stood beside me. The angel said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul. You must go on trial in front of Caesar. God has shown His grace by sparing the lives of all those sailing with you.'*

"Men, continue to be brave. I have faith in God. It will happen just as He told me. But we must run the ship onto the beach of some island." - Acts 27:22

First God was in Paul's jail cell with him, and now God's angel appeared to Paul when he was lost at sea! God is always with His people!

Application: There is nowhere that you can go where God does not go with you!

Say: On the 14th night at sea, the sailors thought they were near land. In the dark of night, the crew members were afraid that the ship would crash against rocks and be destroyed, so they tried to sneak off in a lifeboat. But Paul stopped them. He told them that they must stay with the ship in order to be saved. This time, the crew listened and obeyed Paul's instructions. Paul told everyone to eat, because they had not eaten for many days. Paul took bread, gave thanks to God, and they ate.

When daylight came, they could finally see land! As they came near the beach, the ship got stuck on a sandbar. The waves were tearing the ship to pieces. The soldiers decided they must kill all the prisoners to keep them from swimming to land and escaping. But Julius wanted to save Paul's life, so he ordered his men not to harm the prisoners. Julius ordered everyone who could swim to jump overboard and swim to shore. He ordered everyone else to hold on to boards from the ship and float to shore. All 276 passengers reached land safely - just as God had promised. God ALWAYS keeps His promises!



Application: All the passengers were blessed because Paul was with them. God's blessing on Paul - saving him from harm - spilled out onto those with him. When you abide in Jesus, and obey His word, those around you will also be blessed!

FROM MALTA TO ROME (Acts 28)

Paul found out that the place they had landed was an island called Malta. He wasn't in Rome yet. **Refer to map.** The natives on Malta were kind to Paul and the other passengers. It was raining and cold when they arrived, and the people from Malta built a fire for them. As Paul began gathering wood for the fire, a snake slithered out and bit him on the hand. **Pull out your hand, with the large snake "attached."** Everyone saw the poisonous snake latched onto Paul's hand! The natives waited for Paul to die suddenly. Now, we all know that God had a plan for Paul. **Ask:** Would this poisonous snake be able to stop God's plan? **No!** **Say:** Well, the people of Malta did not know about God's plan. In fact, they didn't even know about the one true God. Paul flung the snake into the fire. **Toss your snake aside.** The people kept watching and waiting, but Paul was absolutely fine. The people of Malta knew this was a miracle. Paul also began healing people on the island. All the people respected and honored Paul.





After three months, Paul finally sailed to Rome. He preached to the Jewish leaders who lived there. Some believed the truth about Jesus, and some did not. Paul stayed in Rome for two years, teaching everyone who would listen to him. Luke, said: *(Paul) preached boldly about God's kingdom. No one could keep him from teaching people about the Lord Jesus Christ.* - Acts 28:31

Luke does not tell us about Paul's meeting with Caesar. Luke probably finished writing Acts before Paul spoke in front of Caesar. However, in a letter that Paul later wrote from Rome to the believers in Philippi, Paul wrote this:



*All of **God's people** here send you greetings. Most of all, **those who live in the palace of Caesar** send you greetings.* - Philippians 4:22

There were believers in Caesar's household! **Put on the crown.** This verse assures us that Paul did make it to speak to Caesar, and some people in Caesar's palace believed the truth about Jesus.

Application: By God's grace, God had a plan for Paul, even before Paul put his trust in Jesus. God planned for Paul to speak about Jesus to the Jews (**yarmulke**), the non-Jews (**baseball cap**), and their kings (**crown**). Nothing could stop God's plan - not chains, not jail, not a hurricane, not shipwrecks, nor snakes. God's plan was accomplished in Paul's life. In fact, it is still being accomplished, because the words that Paul spoke are written in the Bible and Jews, non-Jews, and kings still read them today! None of the crazy things that happened in Paul's life were a surprise to Paul! God used each thing (even the sins of others) to accomplish His plan in Paul's life.

God also has a plan for your life. He has a plan for each believer in this room. God's plan is like a gift for you. Nothing that happens in your life is a surprise to God. He knew each event in your life before you were born. Abide with Jesus. Depend on the Holy Spirit that lives inside of you to walk through each trial, and to live out the plan God has for you.

PPT Verse

Key Verse: *But the Lord said to Ananias, "Go! I have chosen this man to work for Me. He will carry My name to those who aren't Jews and to their kings. He will bring My name to the people of Israel.* - Acts 9:15

PPT Main Point

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