

Lesson 30

Travels, Trials, and Triumphs

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.” Romans 1:16

Outline

Introductory Story – “That Hurts!”

Main Lesson

Jump-Start Questions

1. The Vision

(Acts 16:6, 9b)

2. The Voyage

3. The Violence

(Philippians 2:9-11; Romans 10:13; Acts 17:31; 1 Corinthians 1:18; Titus 1:9)

Object Lesson: “Is That What the Bible Says?”

4. The Vow

(Colossians 2:10)

5. The Victory

(1 Corinthians 15:57)

Crossing the Finish Line

Lesson Theme

We need to be faithful to share the Gospel of Christ, for by its power people are saved.

Visual Aids

30A and 30B

Supplies

Take Home Sheet 30

Cardstock

Review Last Week’s Lesson

Last week we learned about the Apostle Paul and his many incredible journeys. He spread the gospel of grace to many cities. Can you name a few? (Antioch, the Island of Paphos, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe.) God gave Paul and his traveling companions a different message to spread. They were to preach the gospel of grace. This was a message for ALL men, Jew and Gentile alike. It is a message of reconciliation by God’s grace through faith alone in the finished work of the Cross. We are justified by trusting in Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection. This message was kept a “secret” by God and revealed to Paul.

Paul, Barnabas, and John Mark encountered many trials and tribulations. They were opposed and persecuted. At one time Paul was stoned and his enemies left him for dead. However, he got up and walked right back into the same city!

But they were not met with discouragement all of the time. The church at Antioch grew and many were saved. In Paphos, a Roman governor believed. Lystra was a city where the people had been worshipping idols. But when Paul and Barnabas came on the scene, many believed the gospel there.

Paul remained faithful to the work the Lord gave him to do. In our lesson this week we will learn about more of his travels, trials, and triumphs.

Story: That Hurts!

“Ouch!” said Mom, dropping a pan on the stove.

“Are you OK, Mrs. Johnson?” asked Jimmy.

“Yes, I just burned myself,” sighed David’s mother. “David, would you please get the burn ointment out of the first aid kit in the closet for me?”

“Sure Mom,” called David. “Is this it?” asked David showing his mom a tube of medicine.

“Yes, thank you,” answered Mom.

“What’s that?” asked Jimmy pointing to something taped inside the lid of the first aid kit.

“Probably just some first aid tips,” answered David.

“Why would it be hand written?” asked Jimmy.

David pulled the sheet off the lid of the case and opened it. “You’re right!” exclaimed David.

“It’s a clue! It says ‘Dear David, Ouch! That hurts! Have you ever said that? Do you think Paul might have said that as they stoned him and left him for dead. Acts 14:8-19? Stones aren’t the only things that hurt. One thing doesn’t fit. Do you know why? Love, Grandpa.’ Then there are five lines, probably for the word that’s the clue. And there are five pictures under the blanks: a jellyfish, scorpion, shark, bee, and one that says death.”

“That’s easy,” quipped Jimmy, “they’re all animals except death!”

“Well, not exactly,” answered David. “Jellyfish and sharks are both sea creatures, and bees and scorpions are more like bugs—so they’re not really ‘animals.’ To be an ‘animal’ you have to...”

“OK, OK,” sighed Jimmy. “You know what I mean. They’re alive and they move around, right?”

“Yeah,” answered David deep in thought. “But I think there’s more. Why would Grandpa put death in there? I thought death couldn’t really hurt us because when we die we go to be with God.”

“Hey,” answered Jimmy, “you’re right. It can’t hurt us. Maybe that’s it!”

“No, somehow I don’t think so,” replied David.

“Now what?” answered Jimmy.

“I’m not sure,” answered David. “It doesn’t seem to fit with when Paul was stoned and left for dead. You know, the one in the note.”

“You mean you finally got one you don’t know how it fits?” exclaimed Jimmy in unbelief.

“Wait a second, what’s that written really little at the bottom of the note,” asked David.

“It’s a Bible verse! It says 1 Corinthians 15:55-56,” read Jimmy. “Let’s look it up.”

“I found it,” called David. “It’s talking about the *sting* of death!” yelled David.

“The *sting* of death?” asked Jimmy. “What’s that?”

“It says the sting of death is sin. I think it means we die because of sin and when someone dies, it hurts or ‘stings’ those left behind,” answered David. “But when we get to heaven, death will be gone, and we will never lose those we love anymore.”

“*Sting!* That’s it,” yelled Jimmy. “A jellyfish stings if you touch it, and we know a scorpion and a bee can sting you, and the Bible says death can sting. So it’s the shark!”

“Yes,” answered David. “You’re right, it’s the shark that doesn’t fit. But, I think the clue is *sting* not shark because Grandpa asked why it doesn’t fit.”

“But how does that fit with Paul?” asked Jimmy. “I know it would *sting* when he was stoned. In fact, I think it would do a lot more than just sting!”

“You’re right,” answered David. “But I think it means that even when Paul faced the *sting* of persecutions, he felt the hurt but kept his eyes on God.”

“I hope I can do that when hard times come,” said Jimmy thoughtfully.

“Me, too,” answered David.

Solving the Clue

David and Jimmy found out this week that, even as the Apostle Paul felt the “sting” of persecution, he kept his eye on the the Lord. He continued to be faithful through all his trials and tribulations.

Now there are thirty clues:

Mystery, Alive, Victory, Put On, three E's, B, D, Sound, Ever, Grave, L, Glory, Trump, two S's, H, Caught, Voice, Remain, Savior, Sleep, Raised, Together, O, P, Changed, Lord, and Sting.

(The solution is revealed in Lesson 39.)



Bible Events 3 - Visual 30C

Bible Lesson

Jump-Start Questions

1. What do the Pilgrims have to do with the Apostle Paul?
2. Does Satan believe in God?
3. Should we always be careful to compare what we are taught in Sunday school and church with what the Bible says?

Let's ask God to help us see in His Word what His answers are to these important questions. (Pray)

LESSON



It was time for another trip. Paul and Barnabas had worked closely together on their first journey. They had seen both Jews and Gentiles come to know

the Lord. Paul wanted to visit the cities where he had preached on his first trip and check up on the churches to see how they were doing.

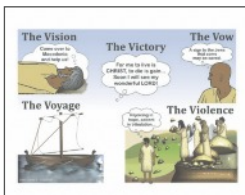
This time Paul was taking two new partners with him, a man named Silas and a young man named Timothy. It was going to be another exciting trip, and many lives were going to be changed forever.

1) The Vision

When they got to Galatia, their plans were to go east, but God had other plans!



Acts 16:6 – “Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the Word in Asia.”



They were not to preach the Word in Asia. How strange! Doesn't the Lord want them to spread the gospel to everyone? God's plans for Paul's ministry

were different than that of the other apostles. He wanted him to go west.

One night Paul had a vision from God.



Acts 16:9b – “There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.”

Immediately he obeyed. He and Silas and Timothy went into Macedonia to tell the people about Christ. This was the way the gospel would spread to the continent of Europe.

Why would that event be so important for us today? Many of us live in countries that were established by Europeans who were looking for a place to worship the Lord in freedom. If it had not been for the brave, dedicated Christians that came to America from Europe, Americans might not have had the opportunity to learn about Jesus. We should be thankful that the apostle Paul brought the gospel into Europe, and we should be grateful that the Pilgrims brought it into America. But most of all we should be thankful to God because He gave us the opportunity to know Him.

During this time there was another man added to the team, a doctor named Luke joined this important work. What a blessing this must have been to Paul. He would not only see many people come to know the Lord, but he was also seeing the Lord add workers to his ministry.

2) The Voyage

The team set sail to spread God's Word. Their plan was to continue to go first to the Jewish synagogue in every city. But when the men got to the city of Philippi, there was no synagogue. Instead they found a group of women that met regularly by the riverside. While they visited with the women, they shared the truth of the Lord with them. One woman paid close attention to what Paul and the men were saying. Her name was Lydia. She was a business woman that sold purple cloth. She believed in and worshipped God, and she listened carefully to what Paul taught about Jesus Christ being the Son of God. Her heart was opened. Because of the message she heard that day, Lydia and her whole house were saved. You see, it

takes more than just believing in God to be saved. Even Satan believes in God.

Satan knows that God exists! It is only by putting your faith in the finished work of Christ, His death, burial, and resurrection that we are saved. If you trust that Jesus died to take the punishment for your sins, He will give you the gift of eternal life. This is what happened to Lydia that day at the river. She and her household were the first Gentile converts in Europe.

3) The Violence

Wherever Paul went there was a strong reaction to his message. There was almost always violence that broke out. Why? Because he preached in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. There is great power in that name, and it always gets a reaction from people.

Even today, most people do not mind if you speak about God. But if you start to talk about Jesus Christ, they become very uncomfortable. There is still power in that name! Amen!



Philippians 2:9-11 – “Wherefore, God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name. That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God, the Father.”



Romans 10:13 – “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

While Paul and Silas were in Philippi, they saw just how violent people could be. They were arrested, beaten, thrown into prison, and placed in stocks for casting a demon out of a slave girl in the name of Jesus Christ. I’m sure they were in a lot of pain, but even while they were bruised and bleeding, the other prisoners could hear the two men singing songs of praise throughout the night (Acts 16:25).

The Lord miraculously caused a great earthquake that night that rocked the jail. Because of the faith and testimony of those two men of God, the jailer and his whole household were saved (Acts 16:29-31).

After regaining their freedom, they went into Thessalonica. Paul preached to the Jews in the synagogue for three Sabbath days. He explained to them that Jesus is the Christ, their promised Messiah. Some of the Jews believed the words that Paul spoke, and a great number of Gentile men and women came to the truth as well. But many of the Jews, especially the leaders in the synagogue, refused to accept the truth about the Lord Jesus. They were moved with envy and gathered up a group of violent trouble-makers to go after Paul and Silas. They were angry that someone was coming into their synagogue and teaching what was against their traditions. After all, they were the experts on God! (They thought!) How dare these men come in and teach something else! They accused Paul and Silas of turning the world upside down. They caused a riot in the city. Paul and his fellow workers could have easily been victims of violence that night, but the brethren immediately came to their rescue and sent them away.

They went to a place called Berea. Like always, they went into the synagogue. The people were open to what Paul was preaching. They “received the Word with all readiness of mind.” They searched the Scriptures daily to make sure that what Paul was teaching was true.

What a great lesson for us today. We need to always be *searching the Scriptures* to make sure we know the truth. Don’t ever take anyone’s word as truth until you know it can be backed up by the Word of God. Many people have been led astray and deceived by false teachings. Don’t let anyone confuse you! Look it up! God’s Word is where you find the Truth!

By studying the Scriptures daily many of the Bereans believed along with quite a few Gentile men and women. Things were going pretty well, for a while.

Then the Jews that had stirred up all the trouble in Thessalonica found out that Paul was preaching in Berea. They would not rest! They went to Berea and stirred up the people against Paul. Once again, he was in danger, but God was not going to let this important ministry be stopped.

The brethren helped Paul out of the city and he sailed away to Athens, Greece. Silas and Timothy stayed behind, so he was all alone in a strange city. Paul was very upset by what he saw there. Just about the whole city was involved in idol worship. They had many different idols for everything. They even had an idol dedicated to the “unknown god” just in case they had forgotten one. These people desperately needed to know the Lord.

The best educated men in the world lived there. The philosophers loved to meet in the marketplace to hear and discuss new ideas. So they listened to what Paul had to say. He told them that the God Who made the world did not live in temples made with hands. He is not something that can be carved from gold, silver, or stone. He is a living God. Paul told the people to repent of their wicked, idolatrous ways:



Acts 17:31 – “Because, He hath appointed a day, in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man Whom He hath ordained; concerning which He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead.”

When they heard him speak of the resurrection of the dead, some of these “wise men” mocked Paul. They could accept worshipping idols made with their own hands, but they made fun of worshipping a living God that had the power over life and death! It is the same way today.

Sometimes when you tell others about Jesus they may react like these men of Athens.



1 Corinthians 1:18 – “For the preaching of the Cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us who are saved it is the power of God.”

We need to have the same attitude that Paul did. He knew that he wasn’t the one that could save these people. Only God can do that. We may not always feel successful in our work for the Lord, but He requires that we be faithful in fulfilling what He has given us to do.



Titus 1:9 – “Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.”

Next, Paul went to the city of Corinth. He reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, persuading both Jews and Gentiles. But when he testified to the Jewish leaders that Jesus was the Christ, they opposed him and began blaspheming.

Paul had had enough! He shook his clothes as if he was shaking off their dust and told them, “Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean. From now on I will go unto the Gentiles” (Acts 18:6). They just would not allow themselves to see that Jesus Christ was their Messiah. Once again the Jewish leaders were rejecting the Lord, just as the leaders in every other city had rejected Him.

The Lord spoke to Paul in the night in a vision (Acts 18:9) and told him not to be afraid. He knew how many people in Corinth had put their faith in Him and how many would do so in the future. He promised Paul that no man would hurt him while he was there. Paul was assured that he was not going to be harmed, and he ended up staying in the city for a year and a half.

4) The Vow

After leaving Corinth, Paul shaved his head and took a Jewish vow. He was following a Jewish custom that showed that he was separating himself unto the Lord and keeping himself holy (Numbers 6:2-8). This kind of action has nothing to do with the way believers today should worship, but it was a sign of obedience to God to the Jews. Paul was simply trying to be “all things to all men” that he might “by all means save some” (1 Corinthians 9:22).

You see, the Apostle Paul had a double ministry at that time. He was in the middle of a transition period according to God’s plan. He was preaching to the “Jew first and also to the Gentile.” He was using signs, miracles, and water baptisms as part of the program because the “Jews require a sign,” and he was still keeping the Jewish feasts.

But the time had come for the “gospel of the Kingdom” program to close. God’s message to Israel concerning the Kingdom of Heaven on earth had ended for a season. He had stopped dealing with Israel as a nation and had set them aside. However, God’s glorious promises to His special people would be fulfilled in the future.

But this was also the beginning of a new program, the “gospel of the grace of God.” This was the good news concerning a “new creation,” the “Body of Christ,” in which “Christ is the Head.” This message from God had been a “mystery hidden for ages” until He revealed it to Paul. With this new program, there was no difference between the Jew and the Gentile believers. Eventually there would no longer be a need for signs, healings, and water baptisms.



Colossians 2:10 – “And ye are complete in Him, which is the Head of all principality and power.”

5) The Victory

Paul and his fellow workers were faithful to the work that God gave them. They got into a lot of trouble because of their testimony of Christ. Over the years Paul had been beaten with whips and rods, stoned, and shipwrecked three different times (2 Corinthians 11:24-25). He had been through many dangers: perils of water, robbers, his own countrymen, Gentiles, and false brethren. But he still could confidently say,



1 Corinthians 15:57 – “But thanks be to God, which giveth the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Crossing the Finish Line

Through it all he was never ashamed of the gospel (2 Timothy 1:12; Philippians 1:20-21). We should be like that, too. Never ashamed to tell others about Christ, and never afraid to let the world know that we are His.

Summary

Paul encountered many challenges on his journeys to spread the gospel of God’s grace. He was able, by

God’s power, to remain faithful. Paul declared that he was not ashamed of the “Gospel of Christ.”

Gospel Presentation

We need to ask the same question the Philippian jailer asked Paul and Silas, “What must I do to be saved?” They replied, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shall be saved.”

Application

The people of the city of Berea “searched the Scriptures daily.” They wanted to make sure that what they were being taught was true. Don’t be led astray by false teachings. God’s Word is where you find the truth!

Preview the Next Lesson

Today we learned of the trials, tribulations, and triumphs of the Apostle Paul as he faithfully took the wonderful gospel of God’s grace out to the nations. Next week we will see how the Jews thought that they could stop Paul’s ministry by having him put into prison. We will learn together how to be truly successful in God’s eyes.

Verse Review Game

One Word at a Time

Before class, glue the Verse Activity 30 to a heavy piece of cardstock, or copy the page onto cardstock. Then, cut out the bookmarks. You may punch a hole in the top of the bookmark and tie a piece of ribbon through the hole. Write the verse on the board. Have the children sit in a row, and then let each child recite one word of the verse. Erase one word starting with “For,” then recite the verse again. Continue until all words are erased. As a special reward, give each child a bookmark for memorizing the verse.

Object Lesson

Is That What the Bible Says?

Supplies: Bible

The Bereans were faithful people who “searched the Scriptures daily.” Write today’s memory verse on a marker or chalk board. Leave out several key words such as “not” and “power.” Change some words such as “every” to “some” and “God” to “man” etc. Have the children look up the verse in their Bibles (Romans 1:16). Explain to them what a BIG difference just a few words can make and how critically important it is to know what God’s Word says.

We always need to be “searching the Scriptures” to make sure that what we are being taught is correct. We need to study diligently so we will not be led astray.

Review Question Game

Paul’s Second Journey

Cut apart the game cards from Activity 30. Place them on the game board. Divide the class into two teams. Cut out the markers and give one to each team. Alternate asking questions between teams. After answering a question, whether correct or incorrect, one team member rolls the die and moves forward that many spaces following Paul’s journey. If they land on a space with a gift or flaming dart, they draw a card from the matching deck, either “God’s Grace” or “Satan’s Darts,” and follow the directions on the card. The turn ends, even if the directions on the card put them on another space with a gift or a dart.

- 1. Who traveled with Paul on his first journey?** (Barnabas.)
- 2. Who were Paul’s companions on his 2nd journey?** (Silas, Timothy, and Dr. Luke.)
- 3. How did the Apostle Paul know to travel west from Galatia instead of going east?** (Paul had a vision from God where he saw a man from Macedonia pleading for him to come and help the people in Europe.)
- 4. Every time the Apostle Paul and his team entered a city, where did they always go first?** (To the Jewish synagogue.)
- 5. Who was the business person that became the first Gentile convert in Europe?** (Lydia; she was a seller of purple cloth.)
- 6. What happened to Paul and Silas in Philippi when they cast out a demon from a slave girl in the name of Jesus Christ?** (They were arrested, beaten, thrown into prison, and put in the stocks.)
- 7. What noble characteristic did the Bereans display that we should keep in our lives today?** (They searched the Scriptures daily and trusted in God’s truth.)
- 8. Where can we find “Truth?”** (Truth is found in God’s Word, the Bible.)

9. True or False. As Paul preached in Athens, Greece, a city wholly given to idol worship, all who heard about Jesus Christ believed. (False.)

10. In the new program, the *mystery* program, there was no longer any difference between what two groups of people? (Jew and Gentile.)

11. Through all kinds of trials, we should live our lives like the Apostle Paul and never be ashamed to tell others about _____, letting the world know that we belong to Him. (Jesus Christ.)

Travels, Trials, and Triumphs

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.” Romans 1:16

On Paul’s second journey he had many trials and tribulations. But he remained faithful to the ministry God gave him. There were also wonderful triumphs along the way. The Philippian jailer, a woman named Lydia, and many others believed. Paul was not ashamed of the gospel. **Directions:** Fill in the crossword puzzle below and review some things that happened on this journey.

ACROSS

- 2. Another name for Paul (Acts 13:9)
- 5. The city where Paul had a vision (Acts 16:9).
- 6. A city where people worshipped idols (Acts 17:22-23).
- 8. What Paul and Silas were doing in the jail (Acts 16:25)

DOWN

- 1. We are not to be _____ of the gospel (Rom. 1:16).
- 3. She sold purple cloth (Acts 16:14).
- 4. They searched the Scriptures daily (Acts 17:11).
- 7. One of Paul’s traveling companions (Acts 15:40)

“For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.” 2 Timothy 1:12

Directions: Name some cities where Paul preached the gospel.

- | | | | |
|---------|--------------|---------|--------------|
| M _____ | (Acts 16:7) | B _____ | (Acts 17:10) |
| T _____ | (Acts 16:11) | A _____ | (Acts 17:22) |
| P _____ | (Acts 16:12) | C _____ | (Acts 18:1) |

