

WEEK
THREE
JULY 2023

LARGE GROUP
PRETEEN

Sermon Outline

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

The Perfect Storm Paul Ship wrecked Acts 27:1–28:10

GOD VIEW:

THE CONNECTION BETWEEN FAITH AND GOD'S CHARACTER, AS SHOWN THROUGH GOD'S BIG STORY
FAITH IS TRUSTING IN WHAT YOU CAN'T SEE BECAUSE OF WHAT YOU CAN SEE.

WEEK 3

Key Question: What helps you remember that God is with you? It's easy for anyone to only see the bad in a situation. That's why we start our preteen discussions with this question. We pray that they'll see that, although life may be difficult right now, God is still working. God is still with them, and God can make something good come from this season of life. In Acts 27:1–28:10 we find a moment toward the end of Paul's life. Paul was on his way to Rome to stand trial, but he and the entire crew were shipwrecked on the journey. This was a major setback, but Paul knew he could trust God no matter what.

Bottom Line: When bad things happen, God is with you. Life will not always be easy. Thankfully, when we have a relationship with God, we don't have to go through difficult things on our own. When we remember that God is with us, that can change the way we see our problems. We can trust God no matter what and have faith that we don't have to face our challenges alone.

This message should be 15- 20 mins. More time for small group is key.

Use this as a guide or fill free to use this page to write your sermon.

Landing:

"What helps you remember that God is with you? When you are going through a difficult time, how can you be reminded that you are not alone? More than that, who is there with you to help batten down the hatches when the water is coming up over the side? Before you head out, let's pray and ask God to help us with this! Let's pray!"

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

TODAY'S KEY QUESTION

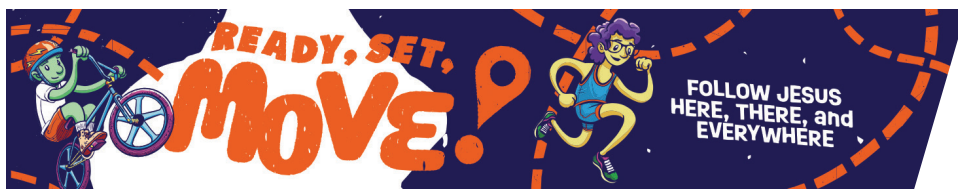
What helps you remember that God is with you?

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

When bad things happen, God is with you.

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

"God's grace has saved you because of your faith in Christ. Your salvation doesn't come from anything you do. It is God's gift." Ephesians 2:8, NIRV



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PRELUDE **SOCIAL** **STORY** **WORSHIP** **GROUPS** **HOME**

25 MINUTES 10 MINUTES

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

The Perfect Storm
Paul Shipwrecked
Acts 27:1-28:10

TODAY'S KEY QUESTION

What helps you remember that God is with you?

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

When bad things happen, God is with you.

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

"God's grace has saved you because of your faith in Christ. Your salvation doesn't come from anything you do. It is God's gift."
Ephesians 2:8, NIV

MONTHLY VIRTUE

Faith—Trusting in what you can't see because of what you can see

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

LARGE GROUP

ENGAGE KIDS' HEARTS THROUGH A DYNAMIC AND INTERACTIVE BIBLE STORY, WORSHIP, AND PRAYER EXPERIENCE IN A LARGE GROUP SETTING.

AUDIO: PLAY HIGH-ENERGY MUSIC AS STUDENTS ENTER.

SLIDE: THEME

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP

Host enters . . .

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): COUNTDOWN (30- OR 60- SECOND VERSION)

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME

WELCOME

Host has lots of energy as he or she welcomes everyone to [Name of Environment]. Host is relatable and inviting. Host can talk about something that happened culturally throughout the week like a big sports game, movie opening, a viral video on YouTube, etc. Host tells them how excited he or she is that they're there and briefly runs through what they can expect. This is especially helpful for first-time guests to make them feel like they know what's happening.

OPENER

HOST: "Welcome to [Name of Environment], everyone! Quick question—do you know anyone who talks, like, 24/7? Someone who is just constantly saying stuff? (pause) Are any of those people in the room right now? (pause) Great! You'll be perfect for what we have planned!"

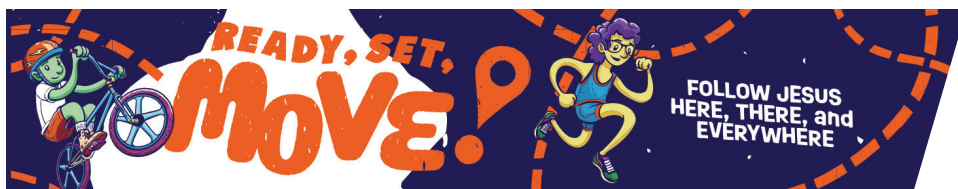
Choose four volunteers and arrange them into teams of two. Don a pirate accent for the next line.

"Yarr, it be the 'Great Sailboat Battle!"

SLIDE: "THE GREAT SAILBOAT BATTLE"

"These aren't motor boats, nay, ye scalliwags! These be air powered ships, like me grandpappy use ta steer when sailin' the high seas! Yarr!"

Drop the accent.



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“Okay, so maybe I’m not a pirate, and maybe my grandpappy was a truck driver, but this is without a doubt the best Sailboat Battle this side of [Name of your town]. We have our sea (*indicate to the tub*), and we have our sailboat.

Drop the sailboat into the container of water.

“Two teams. One boat. It’s your task, as partners, to try to blow the sailboat over to the other side of the container—using only a straw. There is a thin string line across each side, and the first team to maneuver the boat to touch the other team’s line wins the Great Sailboat Battle!

Pick up the boat out of the water and arrange the teams to be on opposite ends of the container. The start of the battle is the drop of the sailboat.

“Ready . . . set . . . blow!

AUDIO: FUN BACKGROUND MUSIC

Drop the boat in the middle of the container and play the game. Teams can battle until a sailboat hits the string or until it sinks. If it does so, take it out and set it up again.

Play again with new teams if there is time. You can also attempt with two sailboats in the water at a time.

(After the game, imitate a pirate accent again) “Yarr, mateys! That be the most thrilling Sailboat Battle yet! Now let’s pegleg it over and be singin’ some worship together!”



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10 MINUTES

WORSHIP

Worship Leaders enter as Host exits.

WORSHIP LEADER: "I'm so thankful that God is with us every day. Let's kick off our time of worship with this song that says, 'You're everything to me'. Give it all you've got today. Our God is everything we need. Stand and sing with me.

AUDIO: "EVERYTHING TO ME" / TRACK 9 FROM EVERYTHING TO ME

OPTIONAL VIDEO: "EVERYTHING TO ME" LIVE LYRICS OR DANCE MOVES MUSIC VIDEO

"When we face challenges in life, it's good to remember that our God is above all things. That gives my heart so much hope and confidence! As we read in Proverbs 18:10: 'The name of the Lord is like a strong tower. Godly people run to it and are safe.' (NIV) Today, as we worship, let's put all of our focus on God as we sing. Here we go.

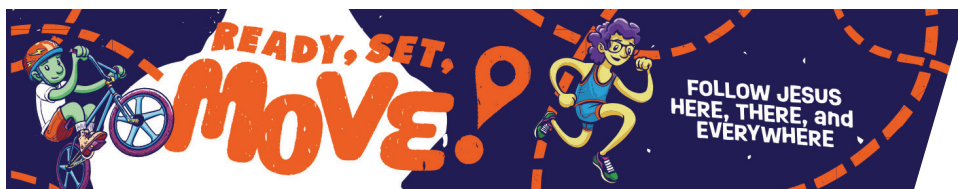
AUDIO: "OUR GOD IS STRONGER" / TRACK 6 FROM EVERY BEAT

OPTIONAL VIDEO: "OUR GOD IS STRONGER" LIVE LYRICS OR DANCE MOVES MUSIC VIDEO

"It really helps me to sing praise to God when I'm feeling scared or overwhelmed. I have a feeling there are many of us today going through tough things, and we need the words of this song today. Let's make this our prayer as we sing. God is with us!"

AUDIO: "EVEN WHEN" / TRACK 10 FROM THIS LOVE

OPTIONAL VIDEO: "EVEN WHEN" LIVE LYRICS OR DANCE MOVES MUSIC VIDEO



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COMMUNICATOR SCRIPT (STORY)

SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND

Communicator enters as Worship Leaders exit.

Communicator is going to dramatically react over the next couple minutes as everything seemingly starts going wrong. This should be comedic.

INTRODUCTION

COMMUNICATOR: "Hello, friends! It's time for another . . .

Comically trip while entering.

"Oof . . . did not see that step there. Is that new? Well, I am so glad that you all are here at . . .

Dramatically point at the screen. Nothing happens.

"(Nervously...a little louder) I said . . . I am so glad that you all are here at . . .

Dramatically point at the screen again. Still black.

"Ah. Heh heh. Okay then, moving right along . . .

Back away from the screen but then comically trip over something and fall in a heap.

"Yow, that smarts! (rubbing ankle) Oh, yeah. That'll hurt in the morning.

Stand back up, favoring a hurt ankle.

"Okay. Deep breath. Let's try this again from the top.

Limp off and reenter. This time, the microphone doesn't work.

AUDIO: TURN COMMUNICATOR MIC OFF

"Hello, friends! (Realizing mic isn't working) Hey, everybody? Everybody? Hello? Is this thing on? (Getting frustrated) What is happening today?"

Host enters to find Communicator frustrated.

HOST: "Ah . . . you okay?"

COMMUNICATOR: (Yelling because mic isn't working) "I mean . . . everything is going wrong but . . ."

Host appears to be adjusting Communicator's mic.



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HOST: "Oh, look. You must have bumped the switch. (fixing it) There ya go, buddy."

AUDIO: TURN COMMUNICATOR MIC BACK ON

COMMUNICATOR: *(Mic is on)* "Oh. Hey! Hi! Yes, there it is. *(Attitude is bouncing back)* Okay, we can still do this. *(Takes a big confident step)* And the ankle still hurts but okay! Here we go! *(To Host)* Hey, thanks for helping me out!"

HOST: "No problem. How many times have you bailed me out before! *(Communicator begins to answer)* DON'T answer that!"

Host exits.

TENSION

COMMUNICATOR: "Ugh. Super sorry I lost my cool. *(pause)* Has that ever happened to you? You try a bunch of things, and none of them work?"

Allow for a few responses, positively affirming each one.

"Yeah, I so get that. You forget that you had homework, your phone didn't charge overnight, you accidentally sent a text to the wrong person, the food you ordered got messed up—things have a tendency to go wrong all the time, don't they?"

"So how do you deal with that? How do you stay calm when literally everything is messing up around you? How do you respond when difficult moments happen?"

"Those are fantastic questions. And I have a feeling that a majority of you might not be exactly the best when it comes to being patient. Or calm. Or peaceful. Especially when things are going wrong or when things aren't doing what they're supposed to do.

"Good thing we have this. *(hold up the Bible)* This book has whole chapters devoted to this kind of thing. And even though people wrote all of this down centuries ago, we can still flip it open to letters from Paul and learn answers to help us today!"

TRUTH

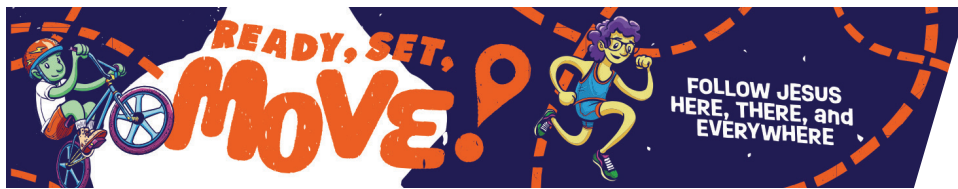
COMMUNICATOR: "Has anyone taken a road trip? Packed up the car, spent days on the road? What's your go-to snack?"

Take a few responses then tell what your favorite road trip snack is.

"Our Bible story today involves the granddaddy of all road trips. Only this one didn't exactly go as planned. Before we get to that epic journey, let's remind ourselves where we are in the epic journey of God's Big Story.

If you're using a Bible timeline on your wall, you can reference it here as you recap.

"Waaaaay back in August, we talked about how God created everything in the world, including people. Adam and Eve turned away from God . . . but still, God had a plan to make things right. God sent Jesus to be our Rescuer. Jesus



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was born as a baby and grew up to live a life of love and compassion. He performed amazing miracles and taught things about God that no one had ever heard before. Jesus died on the cross to pay the price for our sins . . . and then He came back to life!

“Jesus spent some more time teaching and being with His friends before He went back to heaven. After Jesus left, God sent the Holy Spirit to the early Jesus-followers . . . and the early church began to grow quickly.

“One of the Jesus-followers who shared about Jesus was a man named Paul.

SLIDE: GRAPHIC NOVEL 1

As we’ve talked about, Paul traveled all over, starting new churches and telling people about all the amazing things Jesus had done. Last week we learned about his trip to a place called Philippi. He and Silas brought the message of Jesus to the city there. These journeys were certainly not easy. Paul faced many difficulties along the way, some of which we heard about. Paul and his crew were often beaten and laughed at, imprisoned, and chased out of town. Paul even found himself in the middle of a huge plot in Jerusalem to have him killed! Some Jewish people vowed not to even eat or drink until they killed him!

SLIDE: GRAPHIC NOVEL 2

“To spare Paul’s life from the plot against him, Paul was taken to Caesarea from Jerusalem. But he was imprisoned for two years! Paul presented his case to the leadership there, and because he was a Roman citizen, he finally asked to have his case heard before the most powerful man on the planet—Caesar.

SLIDE: GRAPHIC NOVEL 3

“This was a bold move, and quite possibly a dangerous one. Caesar was the top dog, the head honcho, the big cheese, the head of the Roman Empire—and whatever Caesar decided was final. Maybe Paul was thinking that this had the potential to be a game-changer—the most powerful man on the planet was about to hear about Jesus! Besides, Paul was getting nowhere in Caesarea, and a lot of people were out to get him. Kill him, even.

“Paul was put under the command of a Roman commander named Julius and shipped off to Rome. This is where our story begins.

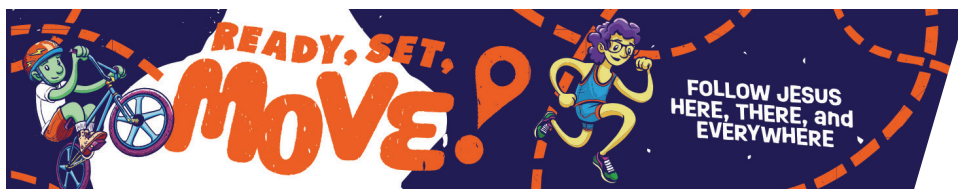
SLIDE: GRAPHIC NOVEL 4

“Paul met a lot of people on his many journeys, and this one was no different. However, there was one man who I’d like to highlight—his name was Luke.

“And if you’re thinking that name sounds familiar, you’d be right. This was the same Luke of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John! Luke wrote the gospel of Luke—and he also wrote the book of Acts. He also happened to be a friend and traveling companion of Paul. So the account we’re about to read is from a first-person eyewitness to everything that happened. Luke was there!

SLIDE: GRAPHIC NOVEL 5

“The voyage began from Caesarea, where Paul had been held prisoner for more than two years. Typical Paul—in



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trouble, or arrested, or imprisoned somewhere.

Open the Bible to Acts 27:1 (NIRV) and read.

“It was decided that we would sail for Italy. Paul and some other prisoners were handed over to a Roman commander named Julius. He belonged to the Imperial Guard.”

“We’ meant Paul and Luke. Julius had his prisoners, including Paul, and they set sail, out for sea. Does anyone remember where they were headed?

Allow responses.

“Right, Rome!

SLIDE: GRAPHIC NOVEL 6

“All the way . . . over there. It wasn’t close. Ships today have all sorts of navigational tools to make sea travel fairly safe. You know what they had? *(Points up)* Stars. And courage. Maybe a little bit of crazy. They didn’t really have maps—maybe a handbook with some notes written down in it. Anchors were used a lot back then. Traveling the sea was dangerous, as Paul and his shipmates were about to find out.

“After a quick stop in Sidon, they set out again.

Open the Bible to Acts 27:4 (NIRV) and read.

“From there we headed out to sea again. We passed the calmer side of Cyprus because the winds were against us.”

SLIDE: GRAPHIC NOVEL 7

“It’s very likely that Paul had been through here before on one of his previous missionary journeys, but this time the winds were pretty rough. Which made the seas rough. Which made a lot of people seasick, I’m assuming. As they tried to pass the island, the winds were against them. They finally passed the island and headed toward the island of Crete. Listen to Luke describe the journey.

Open the Bible to Acts 27:7-8a (NIRV) and read.

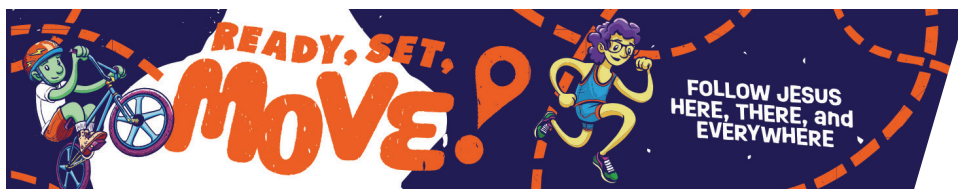
“We moved along slowly for many days. We had trouble getting to Cnidus. The wind did not let us stay on course. So, we passed the calmer side of Crete, opposite Salmone. It was not easy to sail along the coast. Then we came to a place called Fair Havens.”

SLIDE: GRAPHIC NOVEL 8

“Besides the names of the places, what stood out to you about the travel so far?

Allow for responses.

“Yeah. It was slow, arduous, difficult, and windy. Not easy at all. And it was just getting started. They considered



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leaving the island of Crete—but the time of year was very dangerous for sailing. Storms, crosswinds, and the weather would make it pretty bad for travel. Paul tried to warn the commander of this, but his warning was ignored, and they set out into the dangerous, open sea.

SLIDE: GRAPHIC NOVEL 9

Open the Bible to Acts 27:14a (NIRV) and read.

“Before very long, a wind blew down from the island. It had the force of a hurricane!” (pause)

“Offhand, anyone know how fast the winds blow in a hurricane? In miles per hour?”

Take a few responses.

“For this part of the world, we’re talking as fast as 110 mph. Sustained winds. Not just a gust but blowing all of the time against their ship! As Luke described the storm, he said the storm caught the ship and basically took it wherever it wanted. At one point they even had to pass ropes under the ship to hold it together so it wouldn’t fall apart!”

SLIDE: GRAPHIC NOVEL 10

“And the journey got even harder! They started to throw all the cargo overboard, hoping it would make the ship lighter and not sink. It didn’t really work. The next day they threw all of the ship’s tools and supplies overboard, hoping for the same thing, but the storm continued to batter the ship back and forth, up and down, to and fro.”

SLIDE: GRAPHIC NOVEL 11

“It was dark, wet, windy, and terrifying.”

Open the Bible to Acts 27:20 (NIRV) and read.

“The sun and stars didn’t appear for many days. The storm was terrible. So, we gave up all hope of being saved.”

“Hope, however, was something that Paul had in spades. He knew not to put his trust in a rickety ship, or to even be terrified of a hurricane. He had faith and hope because he knew something the others on the ship didn’t know.”

“He knew that everyone, himself included, would be totally fine. Everyone would survive. In the middle of the storm, standing up in the freezing spray of the sea, Paul stood on the deck of the ship and shouted to the crew.”

Open the Bible to Acts 27:21b-26 (NIRV) and read.

““Men,” he said, “you should have taken my advice not to sail from Crete. Then you would have avoided this harm and loss. 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.””

SLIDE: GRAPHIC NOVEL 12

““The angel said, ‘Do not be afraid, Paul. You must go on trial in front of Caesar. God has shown his grace by



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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."

"The men, at this point, were most likely at their wits end. After two weeks being lost in a storm and realizing they were nearing land, they made the decision to run the ship aground on a nearby island.

"But before it could get to the island, the ship struck a sandbar, and the back of the ship began to break apart.

SLIDE: GRAPHIC NOVEL 13

"Paul was right. The angel had told the truth. The ship ran aground at a nearby island, and everyone was alive. There was a slight problem, however. Roman protocol, when transporting prisoners, was very clear—if the ship was wrecked, or sunk or run aground, the soldiers were ordered to kill all of the prisoners to keep them from escaping.

"Even though Paul told them the truth, even though God had saved them, the soldiers still planned on killing all of the prisoners, according to Roman law.

Open the Bible to Acts 27:42-43a (NirV) and read.

"The soldiers planned to kill the prisoners. They wanted to keep them from swimming away and escaping. But the commander wanted to save Paul's life. So, he kept the soldiers from carrying out their plan."

SLIDE: GRAPHIC NOVEL 14

"Julius, the Roman guard put in charge of Paul and Luke, wanted to save Paul's life. Julius must have seen something in Paul. Even more, God clearly was working in the middle of this mess!

"After taking a look around, they discovered that they had crashed onto the island of Malta. While there, a chief official named Publius welcomed them into his home. Hear what Luke wrote about their time there.

Open the Bible to Acts 28:7-10 (NirV) and read.

"Publius owned property nearby. He was the chief official on the island. He welcomed us to his home. For three days he took care of us. He treated us with kindness. His father was sick in bed. The man suffered from fever and dysentery. So, Paul went in to see him. Paul prayed for him. He placed his hands on him and healed him. Then the rest of the sick people on the island came. They too were healed. The people of the island honored us in many ways. When we were ready to sail, they gave us the supplies we needed."

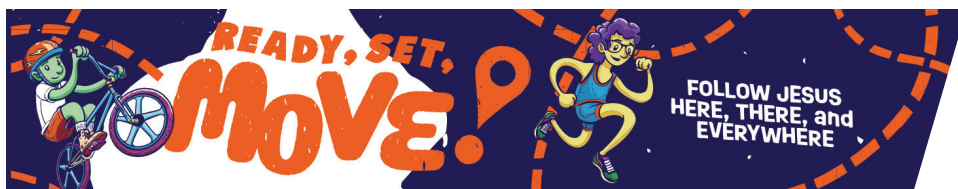
"They spent three months on the island of Malta, and then they boarded another ship.

SLIDE: GRAPHIC NOVEL 15

" . . . and they set out for Rome! After an incredibly long journey . . . they finally made it!

"It was here in Rome that Paul lived under house arrest, waiting to appear before Caesar.

SLIDE: GRAPHIC NOVEL 16



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“During this time, he was allowed visitors, and he spent his time sharing the message of Jesus boldly with whoever would listen, and writing letters.

Open the Bible to Acts 28:30-31 (NirV) and read.

“For two whole years Paul stayed there in a house he rented. He welcomed all who came to see him. He preached boldly about God’s kingdom. He taught people about the Lord Jesus Christ. And no one could keep him from teaching and preaching about these things.”

APPLICATION

COMMUNICATOR: “There is so much I love about this story. Action, adventure, shipwrecks, and miracles, but more than that, we get to see a few really important things in this story. Do you remember why Paul was headed to Rome in the first place?

Allow for responses.

“Exactly. He was headed there to share the message of Jesus.

“You might think just because Paul was doing God’s work, because Paul was going where God was sending him, that things would be smooth sailing. A complete cakewalk. Nope. Not even close. Even though God was directing Paul’s steps, he still went through some really hard times. Just because you’re walking out your faith, obeying what God is telling you, it doesn’t mean that things are going to be easy.

“If you think about it, those hardships actually sent Paul to places he wouldn’t have gone. If that ship didn’t crash on Malta, the chief official’s father and all of the people on the island wouldn’t have been healed. If the people listened to Paul about not sailing into bad weather because of the time of the year, the angel wouldn’t have appeared, and the people wouldn’t have been saved from the shipwreck.

“Even when Paul finally made it back to Rome, he was still a prisoner, but that didn’t stop him. Do you know he actually wrote several of the letters that are in our New Testament from prison in Rome? And he continued to share the message of Jesus boldly.

SLIDE: GOD’S BIG STORY TIMELINE
SLIDE: WEEK 3 TIMELINE IMAGE

If you’re making a timeline of printed images on your wall, take this moment to place today’s timeline image on the clothesline.

“There are so many moments when Paul went through something pretty bad—okay, really bad—and yet he still believed that God was with him through it all. And because of this, he saw these trials in a completely different way. He saw them with hope.

“I’m guessing some of you have gone through or are going through some pretty difficult stuff. And there is no getting around it—sometimes life is just plain hard. And at the time, it might make little to no sense at all. But when we are able to see these moments with a new perspective, believing that Jesus is with us and that He will never



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leave us, it gives us hope to see our way through our problems. It doesn't mean that it's going to be easy. It doesn't mean it won't hurt. But it does mean that when we're in the middle of the storm, battered on every side, we won't be alone.

"One last thought—maybe you're not going through something tough right now, but you have a friend or family member who is. Think about Luke in this story. We often focus on Paul, but do you realize that Luke wasn't a prisoner? He didn't have to go. He chose to. In other words, Luke went through this with Paul willingly, and I imagine that made a big difference. Do you have someone who needs you to travel with them through the storm? It won't be easy, but we won't be alone."

LANDING

COMMUNICATOR: "Today as you go to groups, think about this:

SLIDE: KEY QUESTION

"What helps you remember that God is with you? When you are going through a difficult time, how can you be reminded that you are not alone? More than that, who is there with you to help batten down the hatches when the water is coming up over the side? Before you head out, let's pray and ask God to help us with this! Let's pray!"

SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND

Communicator leads group in a prayer related to what they just heard. After prayer, Communicator dismisses kids to Small Group.

AUDIO: PLAY HIGH-ENERGY MUSIC AS THE KIDS EXIT.

SLIDE: THEME

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP