



ACTS

Of All the Apostles

You Will Be My Witnesses:

Running the Race

Lesson 40



Ready

Acts 21:1-36

Supplemental Scripture

Hebrews 12:1-3
Hebrews 6:1-12
Hebrews 10:35-36
Romans 12:1-2

Memory Verse

When you hope, be joyful.
When you suffer, be patient.
When you pray, be faithful.
Romans 12:12 (NIRV)

Lesson Goals

Understand that Paul knew what awaited him in Jerusalem

Understand that Paul was ready for whatever God allowed to happen

Understand that because of Paul's example, his companions were okay with whatever God allowed to happen

Understand that Paul went to Jerusalem anyway

NOTE: Familiarize yourself with this story. Study the supplemental Scripture and make notes on, but do NOT read from, these pages. To reinforce that these ideas are not your own, hold your Bible as you tell the story.

When you are training for a race, or other competition, and your muscles ache or your feet hurt, what do you do? Do you give up? Do you keep up with the training and complain? Or do you realize that the pain is sometimes part of the process and give thanks for what you have learned and accomplished? Let's see what Paul did.

After Paul, Luke, and the others had torn themselves away from the Ephesian elders, they headed out to sea. (Acts 21:1 NIRV) They sailed south to the island of Cos, then over to the island of Rhodes, and then on to the region of Lycia where they landed at the port of Patara. From there, they sailed through the Mediterranean until they finally landed in Syria at the port of Tyre. While the ship was being unloaded, they looked for the believers there. They stayed and visited with them for a week. The believers tried to get Paul to change his mind about going to Jerusalem. But when it was time to go they went down to the beach and prayed with Paul there. Then they said good-bye.

Paul and his companions continued traveling. They went to Ptolemais, then on to Caesarea. They stayed in Caesarea a few days and met a prophet named Agabus who had come down from Judea. Agabus approached Paul and the others. The Scripture tells us what happened: 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.'" (Acts 21:11 NIRV)

When Paul's companions heard this, they begged him not to go to Jerusalem. Paul 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.'" (Acts 21:13 NIRV) When they couldn't change Paul's mind they resigned themselves to be okay with whatever God allowed to happen to Paul. And so, they went to Jerusalem.

Application

I began by asking you how you deal with muscles aches or sore feet, when you are training or competing? Do you give up? Do you keep up with the training and complain? Or do you realize that the pain is sometimes part of the process and give thanks for what you have learned and accomplished? Our memory verse says, "When you hope, be joyful. When you suffer, be patient. When you pray, be faithful." Romans 12:12 (NirV)

We have talked before about the fact that all who want to live a godly life will suffer. (2 Timothy 3:12) We have also seen the need to be faithful, even if it means you must die. (Revelation 2:10)

So, how are you doing? It is impossible, you know, if you aren't walking in a relationship with Jesus, the One who suffered the shame of the cross so that you and I can have the hope of eternal life. Will you commit your life to Him today?

Their welcome in Jerusalem was warm. Paul was able to share with the church leaders all the amazing things God had done during his third journey. "When they heard this, they praised God." (Acts 21:20 NirV) The church leaders were also concerned, though, about some things they had heard. They were lies regarding the laws and rules of the Jews, but many people believed them and they knew that Paul would have trouble because of these lies. The church leaders suggested that Paul go to the temple and, in public, give evidence that what had been said against him was not true.

Paul agreed and did as the church leaders suggested. But when "the seven days of cleansing were almost over, some Jews from Asia Minor saw Paul at the temple. They stirred the whole crowd. They arrested Paul." (Acts 21:27 NirV) Nothing Paul had done mattered to them. They were enraged. And not only did they stir the whole crowd, "the whole city was stirred up." (Acts 21:30 NirV) People ran from all directions. They grabbed Paul and dragged him out of the temple, trying to kill him.

The commander of the Roman troops in Jerusalem got word of the mob action. Off he went with his troops, but when they arrived, the people stopped beating Paul. And just as Agabus had said while they were in Caesarea, Paul was arrested by the Jews and handed over to those who aren't Jews - the Romans. The commander tried to find out what had happened, but the people didn't agree. One person yelled one thing while someone else yelled another. So, Paul was taken to the Roman fort. The Holy Spirit had told Paul this would happen. Paul was faithful to God, even in difficult circumstances.

Next Week
Paul's Defense
Acts 21:37-22:30

Preschool Lesson

After Paul, Luke, and the others had torn themselves away from the Ephesian elders, they headed out to sea. (Acts 21:1 NlrV) They sailed south to several islands and then finally landed in Syria at the port of Tyre. While the ship was being unloaded, they looked for the believers there. They stayed and visited with them for a week. The believers tried to get Paul to change his mind about going to Jerusalem. When Paul's mind couldn't be changed and when it was time to go, they went down to the beach and prayed with Paul there. Then they said good-bye.

Paul and his companions continued traveling. While they were in the city of Caesarea they met a prophet named Agabus. He went to Paul and the others. Agabus told Paul that God's Holy Spirit had spoken to him. The Holy Spirit told him that he would be arrested by the Jews in Jerusalem and turned over to people who weren't Jews. When Paul's friends heard this, they begged him not to go to Jerusalem. Paul asked them, "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." (Acts 21:13 NlrV) When they couldn't change Paul's mind they decided to be okay with whatever God allowed to happen to Paul. And so, they went to Jerusalem.

The believers were excited to see them when they arrived in Jerusalem. Paul was able to share with the church leaders all the amazing things God had done during his third journey. "When they heard this, they praised God." (Acts 21:20 NlrV) The church leaders were also concerned. People were telling lies about Paul. These lies caused the Jewish people to be very upset. They stirred the whole crowd and arrested Paul. And not only did they stir the whole crowd, "the whole city was stirred up." (Acts 21:30 NlrV) People ran from all directions. They grabbed Paul and dragged him out of the temple. They tried to kill him.

But, the commander of the Roman troops in Jerusalem got word of it. Off he went with his troops. When they arrived, the people stopped beating Paul. They handed him over to the Romans, just like Agabus had said. The commander tried to find out what had happened, but the people yelled one thing and then another. So, Paul was taken to the Roman fort. The Holy Spirit had told Paul this would happen. Paul was faithful to God, even when it was hard.

Activities

Memory Verse Activity - Encourage each student to make a paper chain from strips of paper on which they have printed phrases of the memory verse. Don't forget the Scripture reference.

Sing "God is My Refuge," and "I Will Run the Race."

Be sure to mark the cities of Cos, Rhodes, Patara, Tyre, Ptolemais, Caesarea, and Jerusalem on your wall map.

Responsively read through one of the Psalms about praising God in difficult circumstances.

Make a large floor sized maze of the cities Paul visited at the end of his third journey. Help your students navigate through the maze, visiting the cities in the order Paul visited them.

Read and discuss the supplemental Scriptures in light of the lesson.

As you continue memorizing Hebrews 12:1-3, focus on the third verse. Talk about what Jesus suffered and how we can be faithful, even if we must suffer, too.



When you hope, be joyful.
When you suffer, be patient.
When you pray, be faithful.

Romans 12:12

Racing Riddles

Use the key below to fill in the spaces.

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ , _ _ _ _ _ _ _ .
 4 19 22 13 2 12 6 19 12 11 22 25 22 17 12 2 21 6 15

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ , _ _ _ _ _ _ _ .
 4 19 22 13 2 12 6 8 6 21 21 22 9 25 22 11 26 7 18 22 13 7

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ , _ _ _ _ _ _ _ .
 4 19 22 13 2 12 6 11 9 26 2 25 22 21 26 18 7 19 21 6 15

_ _ _ _ 1 2 : 1 2
 9 12 14 26 13 8

Key

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
 26 25 24 23 22 21 20 19 18 17 16 15 14 13 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Racing Riddles

Use the key below to fill in the spaces.

W H E N Y O U H O P E , B E J O Y F U L .

4 19 22 13 2 12 6 19 12 11 22 25 22 17 12 2 21 6 15

W H E N Y O U S U F F E R , B E P A T I E N T .

4 19 22 13 2 12 6 8 6 21 21 22 9 25 22 11 26 7 18 22 13 7

W H E N Y O U P R A Y , B E F A I T H F U L .

4 19 22 13 2 12 6 11 9 26 2 25 22 21 26 18 7 19 21 6 15

R O M A N S 1 2 : 1 2

9 12 14 26 13 8

Key

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

26 25 24 23 22 21 20 19 18 17 16 15 14 13 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Word Search

Places Paul Visited

c o r a n d r h o p l a s e h
e a s w t a i p p a l u r o c
n a s o c s h b w t e a o o e
h h n y a i j s l u a a s o a
i t e s m e g n i h r a n a g
s t c a e s a r e a n t f t e
u o t r l i i n t d r l e g r
s m o s a p o a r g d o e r y
s i r a s r p h m n r s r o p
s w o d u i o s n e i b h n a
e r c o r d a u h r l l r o r
t t d e e i l r u y k o o h t
b s r s j h w e h t e g t t a
e i o l l p a j i l a s e p p
e a c s s a g p h i l e f e r

Cos and Rhodes

Patara

Tyre

Ptolemais

Caesarea

Jerusalem

Word Search

Places Paul Visited

c o r a n d r h o p l a s e h
e a s w t a i p p a l u r o c
n a s o c s h b w t e a o o e
h h n y a i j s l u a a s o a
i t e s m e g n i h r a n a g
s t c a e s a r e a n t f t e
u o t r l i i n t d r l e g r
s m o s a p o a r g d o e r y
s i r a s r p h m n r s r o p
s w o d u i o s n e i b h n a
e r c o r d a u h r l l r o r
t t d e e i l r u y k o o h t
b s r s j h w e h t e g t t a
e i o l l p a j i l a s e p p
e a c s s a g p h i l e f e r

Cos and Rhodes

Patara

Tyre

Ptolemais

Caesarea

Jerusalem