

Mission Arlington / Mission Metroplex Rainbow Express July / August 2004 Day Three: Paul in Thessalonica *Praying to Request*

Opening Time

You will begin each day by knocking on doors and then playing games to help attract children to your Rainbow Express. Have all the children sit down in a large group. It would be helpful to bring a tarp for them to sit on.

When the children are together, begin your song time. Be sure to have several songs ready to sing and that everyone in the group knows the songs. Doing the puppet show in between songs can help keep the children's attention.

Memory Verse

As your song time ends, the memory verse leader will stand and help the children learn this week's memory verse. Use your own words and be energetic while you speak. If the children believe you are excited about the scripture, they will be excited as well. The children will practice the verse again in their small group time.

The large group memory verse activity for day one is "Hand Signs." See the back of the packet for instructions for this activity.

Now, divide the children into small groups. Make the groups as small as possible to allow for more one-on-one time.

Small Group Time

Today's Story: Paul in Thessalonica (Acts 17:1-9, 2 Thessalonians 3:1-5)

When you tell the story use as many interactive elements as you can. You are going to be outside talking to kids with short attention spans. Keep them involved so they will hear the story! Remember that involving the children will help them pay attention. Use hand motions and sound effects. Have your children repeat things back to you. Ask questions.

DO NOT READ TO THE KIDS. TELL THEM THE STORY!

Helpers: While the story teller is teaching, sit with the children and be a good example by listening to the story. Watch for children who need special attention.

Monday we started learning about Paul. We learned that Paul used to be a very bad man. He used to find people that believed in Jesus and put them in jail. Then one day, Paul's life changed. Jesus visited Paul. Paul found out that all the things he had been doing were bad. Paul prayed. That means he talked to Jesus. Paul prayed and asked Jesus to forgive the bad things he had done. Paul started a new life, telling everybody he could about Jesus.

Yesterday we learned about Paul's visit to Philippi. Some people in Philippi did not like what Paul was saying. They did not want Paul to tell people about Jesus. They threw Paul into a jail. Paul prayed while he was in jail. He prayed a happy prayer. He prayed, telling God how wonderful Paul thought God was. Paul always loved God, even when bad things were happening. Paul always loved to pray to God.

Not long after Paul and his friend Silas left Philippi, they traveled to a city called Thessalonica. Thessalonica was a big, busy, important city. It was the capital of the whole area. Paul and Silas had a friend in Thessalonica named Jason. They went to his house to stay.

Paul and Silas wanted a chance to tell people in Thessalonica about Jesus. Together, they went to a church. Paul got up in front of all the people and started to explain to them about Jesus. Many of the people in Thessalonica had heard about God, but they did not know about Jesus. They listened to everything Paul said.

Paul did this for three weeks. He told the people all about Jesus' life. He told how Jesus was God's son. He told how Jesus came and never did anything wrong. Paul explained that Jesus was the only person that had never sinned. Paul told the people of Thessalonica about all the amazing things Jesus did, and all the ways that Jesus helped people.

Finally, Paul told of Jesus' death. He told how Jesus had let soldiers drive big nails into his hands and feet. They nailed Jesus to a wooden cross. Jesus died on that cross. Jesus died so that he could take the punishment for the sin that we do. Paul told how on the third day, Jesus came back to life. Now anybody that wants can ask Jesus to be in his or her life.

Many of the people in Thessalonica believed in Jesus. Some people though, were angry. Just like in Philippi, these people did not want Paul to talk about Jesus. They decided that they wanted to arrest Paul and Silas. They rushed to Jason's house to find them.

When the angry crowd arrived, Paul and Silas were not there. Instead, the crowd grabbed Jason and some of the other people that believed in Jesus. They shoved Jason and his friends in front of the leaders of the city.

“These people cause trouble all over the place,” the crowd shouted. “Now they have come here to Thessalonica. Jason let Paul and Silas stay in his house. He is helping them.

These people are saying things against our law. We only care about the king, but Paul and Silas say that Jesus is really in charge.”

The city leaders did not know what to do. Finally, they made Jason and his friends pay a lot of money, then they let them go. Jason and the other followers of Jesus knew that the crowd still wanted to kill Paul and Silas. They carefully hid them until night came. Then, in the dark, they snuck Paul and Silas out of Thessalonica.

Paul and Silas continued their trip, hurrying to the next city to tell the people there about Jesus. Paul wrote a letter to his friends in Thessalonica. He told them that he was glad they still followed Jesus, even though sometimes it was scary. “Finally, our friends,” Paul wrote (*2 Thessalonians 3:1*), “please pray for us. This will help the message about Jesus to spread quickly, and others will respect it, just as you do.”

Paul knew how important it was to pray and ask God for the help that we need. Whenever Paul was in danger, he prayed. When Paul needed something, he prayed. When Paul was sick, or in jail, or being attacked, he always prayed. Paul knew that God loves us. He wants to help us. All we have to do is ask Him.

We have already spoken several times about the most important thing Jesus ever did to help us: die on the cross. Jesus loves us so much that He let Himself be killed in order to help us. He was punished for what we do. Now, we can ask Jesus to be part of our life. If we do, Jesus promises to come into our life and forgive us. He will help us forever.

If you would like Jesus to be in your life, let us know. We would like very much to be able to help you.

Prayer Time

Take this time after the story to pray with the children in your small group. Tell God how awesome He is and thank Him for making us. Thank God that He wants to help us. Go around your small group and have the children name things they could ask God to help them with. Pray about each of those things. Thank God that He wants to be with us and that He sent Jesus. Tell God thank you that He wants to talk with us.

Craft

While still in your small groups, lead the children in making the craft for the day. The craft time is not only a way to reinforce the lesson, but it also allows time to get to know the children in your small group. During this time, ask them questions about their families, friends, and school. Invest in their lives.

Windsock

Supplies:

One half-page coloring sheet per child

Streamers: One each of black, red, white, green, and yellow for each child

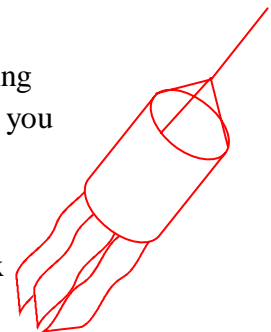
Crayons

Three pieces of yarn or string for each child

Glue or tape

Directions:

1. Have the children color their coloring sheet.
2. Turn the sheet over so that the memory verse faces down. Remind the children that Paul knew how important it is to pray and ask God for what we need. Tell them that today you are going to learn about the most important prayer of all: asking Jesus to be part of our lives. One at a time, glue the streamers to the back of the paper so that most of the length hangs down off the bottom.
3. Glue the three pieces of string to the top of the sheet, spaced about one third of sheet apart.
4. Using the attached explanation of the colors as a guide, spend time talking about what each of streamers represents. It is very important today that you pray as you lead the discussion. Ask God to help you be sensitive to children that may be ready to accept Him.
5. Roll the paper to the “glue here” line. Use a small amount of glue to fix the paper and streamers into a wind sock. Tie the three strings together at the top to make a hanger for the windsock.



Memory Verse Activity

Each day the small group time will include a Memory Verse Activity. The Memory Verse time is one of the most important activities of the day. We want these children to remember God's word and why it is important to them. A list of potential activities is included in the back of this packet. Use an idea from that list each day to help the children learn the words of the verse and to explain why it applies to their lives. (Some require extra preparation, so be sure to review the list in advance.) The memory verse for this week is:

Philippians 4:6—Don't worry about anything, but pray about everything. With thankful hearts offer up your prayers and requests to God.

Filipenses 4:6—No se preocupen por nada. Más bien, oren y pídanle a Dios todo lo que necesiten, y sean agradecidos. **(Spanish)**

Closing Time

Today, you will lead an object lesson in each small group using a heart cut-out to explain how Jesus can help us be complete. Use the discussion below as a guide to talk with the children.

If you are at a site that has an ongoing Mission Arlington ministry, be sure to invite the children to participate in Bible Study and etc. Remember to keep everyone involved and do not read directly from this page.

SUPPLIES NEEDED FOR EACH SMALL GROUP: Heart filler page

(It would be a good idea to already have the heart page pieces already cut out before you start.)

We have been talking all week about God's love for us. We learned about what Jesus did for us on the cross. He took the punishment for all of our sins. We saw how Paul's life changed completely once he let Jesus into his life.

Jesus wants to do the same thing for us. If we let Jesus be part of our life, then we can be just as excited and overjoyed as Paul was to share the good news about Jesus with others. (*Hold up the heart.*) This heart is just like your heart, my heart, and everybody's heart. As you can see, there is something missing from the heart. What is it? Yes, that's right a cross! Every person needs to have Jesus in their life. Just like this paper heart, we're

Just not all together without Jesus. Sometimes people try to be happy with other things besides Jesus. People think that maybe Jesus isn't the only thing that can help them.

Sometimes we think people like our family or friends can fit. (*Place those pieces in.*) But they aren't the same size. Maybe we think money can do it. No, it doesn't fit either. What about

fun things like Six Flags or basketball? No, that doesn't work either. All of these can make us have fun for a little while, but none of them do the same thing that Jesus did for us. (*Place the cross in the heart.*)

Only Jesus can give us a joy that we will have forever. Only through what Jesus did on the cross and then coming back to life can we have a way to live forever in Heaven. If you think you're ready to let Jesus come into your heart, I want to talk with you about it.

When you are finished, pray together and be ready to play games until the end of the Rainbow Express program. After the game time, pass out snacks, clean up the area, and walk everyone home.

Salvation Stripes

DARK STRIPE- This stripe reminds us of sin. Sin is anything we do that is not what God wants us to do. The Bible says that everyone has sinned.

RAYA OSCURA - Esta raya representa el pecado. El pecado es cualquier cosa que hacemos que no le gusta a Dios. La Biblia nos dice que todos hemos pecado.

RED STRIPE- This stripe reminds us of Jesus' blood. Jesus was God's Son and He died on the cross to pay the punishment for our sins.

RAYA ROJA- Esta raya representa la sangre de Jesús. Jesús es el Hijo de Dios y Él murió en la cruz para recibir el castigo de nuestros pecados.

WHITE STRIPE- This stripe reminds us of our new lives. The Bible says that after we have accepted Jesus as our personal Savior, we are made new. Jesus is in our lives! He will never leave!

RAYA BLANCA- Esta raya representa nueva vida. La Biblia nos dice que cuando aceptamos a Jesús como nuestro Salvador, Él nos hace nuevos. ¡Esto es porque Jesús esta en nuestras vidas!

GREEN STRIPE- This stripe reminds us that we are to grow as a Christian. In order to grow in our relationship with God, we need to pray, read the Bible, and hang out with other Christians.

RAYA VERDE- Esta raya representa crecimiento como Cristianos. Para crecer necesitamos tener una relación con Dios. Esto es posible por orar, leer la Biblia, y tener convivió con otros Cristianos.

YELLOW STRIPE- This stripe reminds us of Heaven! The Bible says that people who have trusted Jesus to be their Savior will spend forever in Heaven with Him.

RAYA AMARILLA- Esta raya representa el cielo. La Biblia nos dice que cada persona que ha puesto su fe en Jesús como Salvador estará por toda la eternidad en el cielo a lado de Él.



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