

Acts 18:1-22

Do Not Be Afraid

Scripture: Acts 18:1-22

Memory Verse: Acts 18:9-10a *“Now the Lord spoke to Paul in the night by a vision, ‘Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent; for I am with you...’”*

Lesson Focus: The final leg of Paul’s second missionary journey takes us to the dark city of Corinth where we will see God continue to turn what is upside-down and make it right-side up. One thing we will zoom in on is the Lord’s instructions to Paul to *“not be afraid”*. We hope the kids will hear the Lord whisper the same words to them as we study this passage together!

Activities and Crafts: Paul Before the Proconsul Coloring Picture, Word Search of different terms from lesson, Find the Treasure Discussion for 3rd – 5th.
Craft for 1st/2nd Grade: Faith Over Fear Craft

Starter Activity: Star Wars Video

As we follow Paul on the last leg of his second missionary journey we will see God continue to turn things “upside-down” as we saw last week (**Acts 17:6b**). **Teachers:** Consider having some fun in your classroom by having some things turned upside-down before class. Have the kids find these upside-down things and remind them about how in Acts we have seen God disrupting this upside-down world to make it rightside-up. *

After worship, we will then keep all of the kids in the Summit Room for a quick video from the [first Star Wars movie](#). This familiar video shows Luke Skywalker visiting a pretty nasty place. After watching the video, we will have a little discussion:

Q: How do you think Luke Skywalker felt when he walked into that place? *

A: Nervous, anxious, and uncomfortable!

Q: Why do you think he felt that way?

A: Because the patrons or “creatures” there did not look very nice.

Q: Have you ever entered a place where you felt a little nervous or uncomfortable? Why?

Well, as we follow Paul on his missionary journey, he is going to enter a new city called Corinth. This city was notorious for its sin and corruption. * It’s a place that is **upside-down!** But this is exactly the kind of place that needs the gospel, so that people might be made **right-side up!**

As we have seen before, there is going to be much action and opposition. But the one thing we’ll see that we haven’t seen before is Paul showing a little bit of hesitation and fear (kinda like Luke Skywalker in that video we watched). Let’s see what happens!

Bible Study:

Acts 18:1: Paul was separated from Silas and Timothy last week and he appears to travel to Corinth alone. * But he won't be alone for long!

Acts 18:2-3: While Paul is able to find some companions right away, it appears that he doesn't start preaching the gospel right away, but does something else: WORK!

Q: How many of you do chores to earn money or allowance?

Being able **and willing** to work to support yourself is an important part of growing up and even Paul at times had to do honest work to support himself. *

Acts 18:4: But he still made time to share the message of the gospel! * As we have seen before he went to the synagogues first and shared with the people that were familiar with the Scriptures, reasoning from them. *

Acts 18:5a: Silas and Timothy now join Paul! Last week we saw how fierce the opposition was in Macedonia which is where Paul was separated from them. (**Acts 17:6b**) Yet we read elsewhere in the Bible that they brought good news with them that the believers in Macedonia were thriving despite that opposition! (**1 Thess. 3:6-8**)

Acts 18:5b: And the arrival of Silas and Timothy appears to give Paul the boost he needed to continue boldly sharing the good news about Jesus's death and resurrection. (**Teachers:** Consider sharing a personal story where you may have been thinking about giving up, but someone else came alongside you and encouraged you to keep going)

Acts 18:6: The Jews in the synagogue refuse to repent and believe and appear to kick Paul out of the synagogue. Paul says they only have themselves to blame!

Acts 18:7: But what is a little funny is that Paul appears to just go right next door to the synagogue and use Justus's house as his new preaching station instead!

Acts 18:8: And then God really turns things upside-down (or right-side up)!

Q: Who became a believer and follower of Jesus Christ? A: The leader or ruler of the synagogue! What a huge victory for the good guys! And after someone so high-ranking is won to Christ many others follow. *

Notice also that these new believers were baptized. Remember the city of Corinth was known for its atrocious sin and with baptism these people were proclaiming they were living that way no more and were instead devoted to following Jesus. Again, God took people's upside-down lives and made them right-side up! *

Acts 18:9-10: How these victories must have stirred up the opposition! We don't have details, but the situation must have gotten so dangerous that Paul considered leaving. His feelings of fear were perhaps starting to get the better of him until God Himself speaks!

Q: What is the first thing the He says to Paul? A: **Do not be afraid!**

Of all of the times God speaks throughout the whole Scriptures, the phrase “*do not be afraid*” is the most common (over 100 times!). That alone should encourage us! *

Q: But why shouldn't Paul be afraid? A: God is with him! And He is not only with Paul, but the Bible makes it clear that He is with ALL those who love Him! (**Hebrews 13:5-6**)

Acts 18:11: Notice how Paul responds after receiving these instructions from God! *

Q: What did he do? A: He stayed and taught the word of God for another year and a half!

Acts 18:12: Uh-oh! This doesn't look good. The bad guys form another mob and bring Paul before the ruler of the region.

Q: What did God promise Paul back in v. 10? A: That he would not be harmed. Let's see if God keeps His promise!

Acts 18:13-16: And He does! The ruler dismisses this silly case against Paul who appears to go free!

Acts 18:17: Not only that, but then the local people appear to take Sosthenes, the leader of the bad guys and beat him up publicly. This gives us a little taste of just how upside-down and wicked this city was! On a side note, it appears that this Sosthenes guy became a believer later as he is referenced in Paul's first letter to the Corinthians! (**1 Cor. 1:1**) *

Acts 18:18: Paul remains there a little longer but then leaves when he decides to (not because of fear or opposition). The church was now firmly planted in this upside-down city of Corinth and it was time for him to move on. *

Acts 18:19-21: Paul makes a quick stop in Ephesus which is one of the most important cities in the whole Roman Empire. Surprisingly the folks in this synagogue are hungry for more, but Paul moves on promising to return “if God wills”.

Q: What does Paul mean when he says, “God willing”? A: This describes God's reign and rule over all things and how Paul is surrendered to it.

Q: How do we know what God wills? A: The Bible! We learn God's will for His people by reading or listening to the Scriptures. And like Paul, we ought to live by it! *

Acts 18:22: Paul makes it back to his home church in Antioch wrapping up this second missionary journey. What another huge adventure! There were miracles, mobs, and monstrous opposition, but also many new churches were planted! *

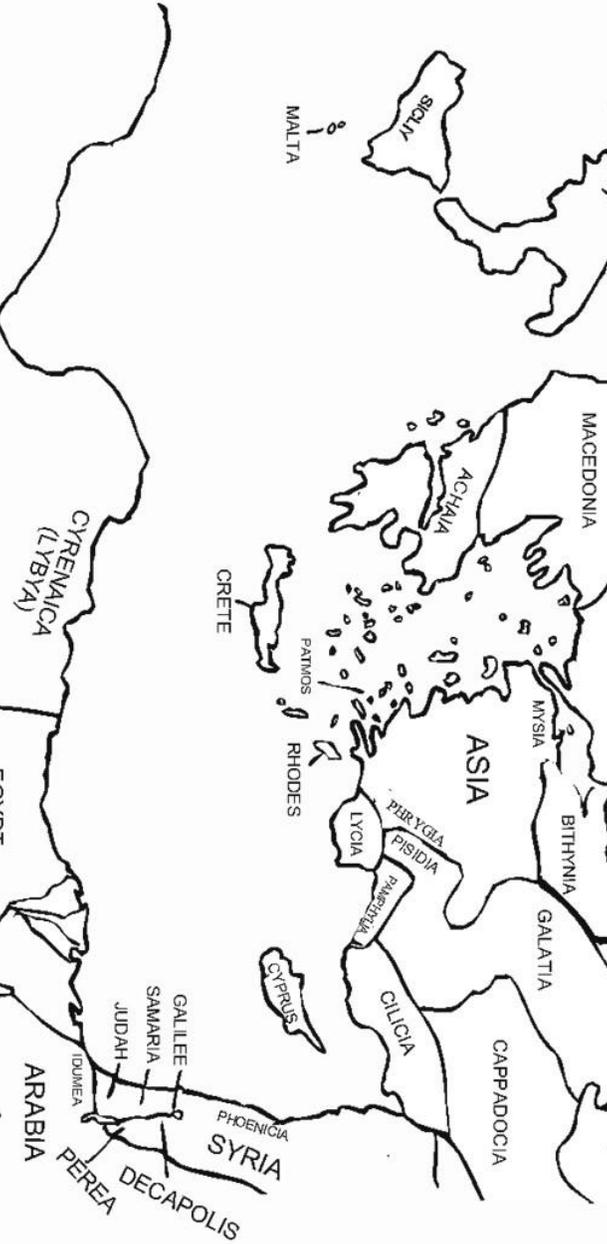
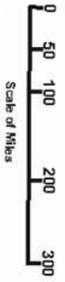
Key Point: A few years later, Paul would write a letter to this church he planted in Corinth. **Read 1 Corinthians 2:1-3.** Notice in v. 3 he admits that he came with fear and trembling! Even great heroes of the faith like Paul had moments of weakness and anxiety.

Q: But what did God tell him? “*Do not be afraid, for I am with you!*” (v. 9-10) Does fear and anxiety have control over you? If you are a believer, trust in your God and King! Jesus told His disciples, “*I am always with you, even to the end of the age.*” (**Matthew 28:20**) Talk to your leader about your fears and ask for prayer!

If you are not a believer, become one today! Repent of your sin like many of these Corinthians did and come under the loving protection of the almighty God!

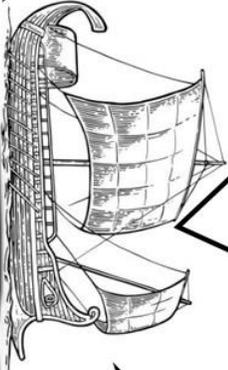
FIND THE TREASURE

Mediterranean World
Countries or Areas and Islands



Read Acts 18:9-10
What are you afraid of?
How can remembering
these words help?

PARENT CHALLENGE
What command from God is repeated
most in the Bible?



Read 1 Corinthians 2:2
What was Paul's goal for
the people of Corinth?