

CALVARY CHAPEL OF PHILADELPHIA

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

1ST GRADE

TEACHER'S PACKET

SUNDAY MORNING

Study 49

Paul in Rome



Paul in Rome

The Objective is the key concept for this week's lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

Objective This lesson will review the story of the New Testament, show God's faithfulness to fulfill all His promises, and encourage the kids to continue the spread of the Gospel.

Key Verses

Acts 28:11-31—Main Teaching Passage

For Paul's journey to Rome, see Acts 27:1-28:10

Memory Verse - 1 Corinthians 1:9

"God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord."

Hook

Review last week's memory verse, 2 Corinthians 5:17.

Write on the board the words, "and they lived happily ever after." Ask what this phrase means and have the class name stories that end with these words. Then ask if they think anything happened to the characters after the story ends. Explain that this ending means that after the events of the story, the characters continued to live happy lives.

Today, we will see the end of the book of Acts. However, even though the book ends, we will see that the story of the spread of the Gospel continues to this day.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

After Paul had appealed to Caesar, he was sent by boat to Rome. As he approached the city, he was greeted and encouraged by some fellow believers. Then, after a long and dangerous journey (see Acts 27:1-28:10), he finally arrived in the city. Paul had journeyed with other prisoners, and when they got to Rome, the rest of the prisoners were handed over to the captain of the guard to be put in prison, but Paul was instead put under house arrest. This means that he didn't have to go to jail, but he had a Roman guard chained to him at all times.

After three days, Paul called the Jews of Rome together and told them that, although he was accused of a crime by the Jews in Jerusalem, he had done nothing wrong. These Jews had heard nothing of Paul, but they were interested in learning more about Christianity. So a few days later, they all gathered together and Paul explained the Gospel to them from the Old Testament from morning until evening. While some agreed with Paul, others disbelieved. Then they got upset when Paul called them out for their unbelief. He quoted the words of the prophet Isaiah to them and declared that he would preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. This caused a great argument between the Jews of Rome.

The book of Acts ends with the report that Paul spent the next two years living in Rome and preaching the Gospel to the people and teaching them about Jesus with nothing hindering him. Paul ended up preaching in Rome until his death a few years later.

LOOK

Think back to the beginning of the book of Acts. In Acts 1:8, Jesus promised the apostles that they would be witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the end of the world. As we have studied through the book of Acts, we saw the Gospel spread throughout Jerusalem, then Judea, then Samaria. Now, at the end of the story, the Gospel reached Rome, the heart of the Roman Empire. Christianity had officially become a global religion, and Jesus had kept His promise.

Now think back even further. The world was living in darkness and sin, and God promised to save it. So we started the year by seeing how He sent His Son Jesus into the world. He was born as a human baby, and as we studied His life, we saw that He lived perfectly and without sin, teaching many things and performing miracles. Yet He was rejected by the religious leaders and killed as a criminal. Then, He rose again three days later, conquering sin and death for us all and making a way for the whole world to be saved. But the story didn't end there.

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK (Continued)

Jesus fulfilled God's promise to make a way of salvation for all, but in order for people to be saved, they had to hear this good news. The book of Acts shows how the message of the saving work of Jesus spread from His twelve followers to a group of people all of the world known as the Church. As we finish the book of Acts, we see that God was faithful to keep His promise to save the world. His saving work had gone from the baby Christ in Bethlehem to a worldwide family of God.

You might have noticed that the book of Acts ends suddenly. It does not conclude with Paul's death or report of the rest of his or any other apostle's ministry. That is because the story isn't over. The Gospel may have been spread across the world, but there were and are still many left who have not heard the good news of Christ. You see, Acts is not the story of Paul, Peter, or any other apostle. It is the story of the spread of the Gospel. It is a story of the growth of the people of God, the Church. And most importantly of all, it is the story of God's faithfulness to keep His promises and continue to save people all over the world.

None of these stories are over. Peter and Paul may be gone, but the Church is still full of believers, there are still people who need to hear the Gospel, and God is still working in the world to save others. As Christians, we are invited to be a part of this ongoing story. Whether God calls you to be a doctor or a pastor, an electrician or a missionary, we all are called to preach the Gospel to our friends, family, and everyone we know who does not know the Gospel.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

As a class, memorize 1 Corinthians 1:9.

As we saw today, God's work in the world through the spread of the Gospel is still going on today. Have a class discussion about ways that the students can continue the work the apostles began in Acts and spread the Gospel.

Pray: Praise the Lord for being faithful to fulfill His promises. Ask Him to grant the class boldness to spread the Gospel to all people.

Parent question: How can we continue the work that began in Acts?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on Acts 28:11-31 by David Guzik

B. Paul at Rome.

1. ([Acts 28:11-15](#)) The final part of Paul's journey towards Rome.

After three months we sailed in an Alexandrian ship whose figurehead was the Twin Brothers, which had wintered at the island. And landing at Syracuse, we stayed three days. From there we circled round and reached Rhegium. And after one day the south wind blew; and the next day we came to Puteoli, where we found brethren, and were invited to stay with them seven days. And so we went toward Rome. And from there, when the brethren heard about us, they came to meet us as far as Appii Forum and Three Inns. When Paul saw them, he thanked God and took courage.

a. **After three months:** They spent **three months** on Malta, gathering strength and waiting for the winter to end.

b. **Landing at Syracuse:** This was the first stop from Malta. **Syracuse** was a famous city in the ancient world, being the capital city of the island of Sicily.

i. Archimedes, the famous mathematician, had lived at **Syracuse**. When the Romans conquered the island, a soldier put a dagger to his throat as he worked on a math problem, drawing in the dirt. Archimedes said, "Stop, you're disturbing up my equation!" and the soldier killed him.

c. **Rhegium... Puteoli... and so we went toward Rome:** As Paul and the others made their way northward up the Italian peninsula, they spent time with fellow followers of Jesus they met along the way (**we found brethren, and were invited to stay with them seven days**).

d. **When the brethren heard about us, they came to meet us as far as the Appii Forum and Three Inns:** Eventually they were greeted outside Rome by Christians from city who came to meet them. They honored Paul by greeting him as the emperors were greeted when they arrived at Rome: they went out to meet him as he came into the city, walking the long journey (about 43 miles or 69 kilometers) to the **Appii Forum** to welcome Paul and his companions.

i. They had received Paul's famous letter to the Romans a few years before, so they probably felt like they knew him already — and they certainly wanted to honor him. In light of the love and honor behind this greeting, no wonder that Paul **thanked God and took courage**.

ii. "Luke is far from giving the impression that Paul was the first person to bring the gospel to Rome... the presence of those Christians — *the brothers*, as Luke calls them — provides evidence enough that the gospel had reached Rome already." (Bruce) There were Jewish people from Rome present at Peter's preaching on Pentecost many years before ([Acts 2:10](#)), so there had probably been Christians from and in Rome from the beginning.

iii. One could say that they treated Paul as if he were a king. "It was a custom when an emperor visited a city for the people to go out and meet him and escort him back into the city." (Horton)

iv. Yet, during his second Roman imprisonment, Paul was left alone and forgotten ([2 Timothy 4:9-16](#)), meaning that in some sense, the Christians at Rome didn't (or perhaps couldn't) maintain their love and honor of Paul.

2. ([Acts 28:16](#)) Paul's status as a prisoner in Rome.

Now when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard; but Paul was permitted to dwell by himself with the soldier who guarded him.

a. **When we came to Rome:** Finally, the promise of Jesus was fulfilled. Paul determined that he would go to Rome as early as his third missionary journey ([Acts 19:21](#), [Romans 1:15](#)). At Jerusalem, Jesus promised Paul he would make it to Rome ([Acts 23:11](#)) and repeated the promise during the two weeks of storm at sea ([Acts 27:23-25](#)).

i. “Now, at the very end of the book, the apostle comes to Rome. Thus Jesus’ prophecy that his disciples would be his witnesses ‘to the ends of the earth’ is fulfilled.” (Boice)

ii. When Paul came to Rome, the city had existed for almost 800 years. The famous Coliseum was not yet built; but the prominent buildings were the temple of Jupiter, the palaces of Caesar, and a temple to Mars (the god of war). At the time, Rome had a population of about two million — a million slaves, and a million free. Society was divided into roughly three classes: A small upper class, a large class of the poor, and slaves.

b. **The centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard:** This was a happy moment for Julius the **centurion**, who fulfilled his duty and successfully brought all the prisoners from Caesarea ([Acts 27:1](#)) to Rome — with much help from Paul.

c. **The soldier who guarded him:** Paul wasn’t in a normal prison. He was allowed to **dwell by himself** and provide his own living space (a *rented house* according to [Acts 28:30](#)). Yet he was constantly under the supervision of a Roman guard, and often chained. The rotation of the guards gave him a constant supply of people to talk to.

i. “To this soldier he would be lightly chained by the wrist...the soldier would be relieved every four hours or so, but for Paul there was no comparable relief.” (Bruce)

ii. In [Philippians 1:13](#), written from this Roman custody, Paul told of how his message reached the palace guards of Rome. Though he was the prisoner, he had a genuinely captive audience.

3. ([Acts 28:17-20](#)) Paul appeals to the Jewish community of Rome.

And it came to pass after three days that Paul called the leaders of the Jews together. So when they had come together, he said to them: “Men and brethren, though I have done nothing against our people or the customs of our fathers, yet I was delivered as a prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans, who, when they had examined me, wanted to let me go, because there was no cause for putting me to death. But when the Jews spoke against it, I was compelled to appeal to Caesar, not that I had anything of which to accuse my nation. For this reason therefore I have called for you, to see you and speak with you, because for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain.”

a. **Paul called the leaders of the Jews together:** Paul followed his consistent practice of going to the Jews first in every city he came to as an evangelist. It took him only **three days** to have a meeting with the **leaders of the Jews** in Rome.

b. **Men and brethren:** Paul wanted them to know that he had not forsaken Israel and that they were still **brethren** to him. As Paul explained to the crowd on the temple mount at the beginning of this ordeal, *I am a indeed a Jew* ([Acts 22:3](#)).

c. **I have done nothing against our people or the customs of our fathers:** Paul wanted them to know that he was innocent of any crime against the law or the Jewish people.

d. **When they had examined me, wanted to let me go:** Paul wanted them to know that the Romans were ready and willing to release him.

e. **Not that I had anything of which to accuse my nation:** Paul wanted them to know that he did not make a counter-suit or accusation against the Jewish leadership that had accused him.

f. **Because for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain:** Paul wanted them to know that he was a pris-

oner because of his belief in Israel's Messiah, the **hope of Israel**.

i. As the year A.D. 70 approached, time was running out before an unparalleled national calamity struck a Jesus-rejecting Israel. In 10 years or so it would be clear that Jesus was **the hope of Israel**, yet a hope that many of them rejected.

4. ([Acts 28:21-22](#)) The Jewish leaders respond to Paul.

Then they said to him, "We neither received letters from Judea concerning you, nor have any of the brethren who came reported or spoken any evil of you. But we desire to hear from you what you think; for concerning this sect, we know that it is spoken against everywhere."

a. **We neither received letters from Judea concerning you:** This demonstrates that the religious leaders who accused Paul in Jerusalem and Caesarea knew their case was hopeless. They made no effort to send ahead documents confirming their case against him.

b. **Nor have any of the brethren who came reported or spoken any evil of you:** Paul wanted to know what they heard from Jerusalem about him. The Jewish people of Rome had not yet heard anything about Paul.

c. **We desire to hear from you what you think, for concerning this sect, we know that it is spoken against everywhere:** Though they did not know anything about Paul, they had heard that Christianity was unpopular among some, being **spoken against everywhere**. They should be complimented on wanting to hear the story from Paul himself.

5. ([Acts 28:23-24](#)) The Jewish community of Rome hears the gospel from Paul.

So when they had appointed him a day, many came to him at *his* lodging, to whom he explained and solemnly testified of the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus from both the Law of Moses and the Prophets, from morning till evening. And some were persuaded by the things which were spoken, and some disbelieved.

a. **He explained and solemnly testified of the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus from both the Law of Moses and the Prophets, from morning till evening:** In what must have been a wonderful time of teaching, Paul spoke of the **kingdom of God**, and gave an exhaustive study of how the Old Testament spoke of Jesus — **from morning till evening**.

b. **Testified of the kingdom of God:** In speaking of **the kingdom of God**, Paul undoubtedly taught what Jesus taught: That in Jesus God brought a spiritual kingdom that would take root in men's hearts before it took over the governments of this world. Most of the Jewish people of Jesus' day and of Paul's day looked for a political kingdom, not a spiritual kingdom.

c. **Some were persuaded by the things which were spoken, and some disbelieved:** In response to this remarkable, day-long teaching from Paul, some believed and trusted Jesus. Others did not, and **disbelieved**. Even the best teaching from the best apostle in the best circumstances could not persuade them.

6. ([Acts 28:25-27](#)) Paul explains the rejection of the gospel from [Isaiah 6:9-10](#).

So when they did not agree among themselves, they departed after Paul had said one word: "The Holy Spirit spoke rightly through Isaiah the prophet to our fathers, saying,

'Go to this people and say:

"Hearing you will hear, and shall not understand;

And seeing you will see, and not perceive;

For the hearts of this people have grown dull.

Their ears are hard of hearing,

And their eyes they have closed,

Lest they should see with *their* eyes and hear with *their* ears,

Lest they should understand with *their* hearts and turn,

So that I should heal them.”

a. **When they did not agree among themselves:** This suggests that those who were persuaded and those who disbelieved started arguing among themselves.

b. **They departed after Paul had said one word: “The Holy Spirit spoke rightly through Isaiah the prophet to our fathers.”** Paul understood that Isaiah prophesied of their hardness of heart. Certainly, Paul was happy that *some* received the gospel, but he was undoubtedly distressed if even *one* of them rejected Jesus.

c. **Hearing you will hear, and shall not understand:** Essentially, Isaiah said this in this passage from [Isaiah 6:9-10](#): “If you reject Jesus, you can hear, but never understand; you can see but never perceive. Your heart is, and will be, hard, your ears closed, and your eyes shut — because you really don’t want to turn to God and be healed of your sin.”

i. This is a message just as true *today* as it was when Isaiah first said it — or when Paul quoted it. Many hear and reject simply because they don’t want to turn to God and be healed of their sin.

7. ([Acts 28:28-29](#)) Paul tells them he will take the message of salvation to the Gentiles.

“Therefore let it be known to you that the salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will hear it!” And when he had said these words, the Jews departed and had a great dispute among themselves.

a. **Therefore let it be known to you:** If some of them rejected **the salvation of God**, it did not make that salvation of no effect. It just meant that God would find those who would **hear it** — in this case, the Gentiles.

i. Paul plead for men to receive Jesus, but not as a beggar might plead. Paul ached not for himself, but for those who rejected — and solemnly warned those who rejected of the consequences.

ii. The preacher of the gospel really preaches two messages. To those who respond to the gospel with faith, he is a messenger of life. But to those who reject Jesus, the preacher *adds* to their condemnation. *To the one we are the aroma of death to death, and to the other the aroma of life to life.* ([2 Corinthians 2:16](#))

b. **When he had said these words, the Jews departed:** This mixed group — some who believed, some who did not — left Paul arguing with each other (**a great dispute among themselves**).

i. In just a few years after Paul’s rebuke of those Jews who rejected Jesus, the Jewish people of Judea were slaughtered wholesale and Jerusalem was destroyed. God’s judgment was coming, and part of Paul’s frustration was that he sensed this.

8. ([Acts 28:30-31](#)) Paul spends two years in Rome before his trial in Caesar’s court.

Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him, preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him.

a. **Then Paul dwelt two years:** Paul spent more than two years at Caesarea waiting for his case to be resolved ([Acts 24:27](#)). Now he spent another **two years** waiting for his case to be heard before Caesar.

i. “The two years’ prolongation of Paul’s stay in Rome could be accounted for adequately by congestion of court business. It took that time for his case to come up for hearing.” (Bruce)

b. **His own rented house:** Probably, Paul continued his work as a tentmaker (leatherworker) to supply the rent for his house (as in [Acts 18:1-2](#) and [20:33-35](#)). Paul was always a hard-working man.

c. **Received all who came to him:** One example of someone who he **received** in Rome was a convert of Paul’s, a runaway slave named Onesimus ([Philemon 1:10](#)), who Paul told to go back to his master Philemon.

d. **Preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all**

confidence: Though Paul could not travel, he could teach and preach to all who came to him — and this he did. He also wrote letters; we have these two years of Roman custody to thank for the letters to the *Ephesians*, the *Philippians*, and the *Colossians*.

i. These two years were not wasted, and God didn't waste Paul's time in Rome. God never wastes our time, though we may waste it by not sensing God's purpose for our lives at the moment.

ii. Paul eventually had his appearance before Caesar Nero. It's entirely reasonable to believe that he boldly and powerfully proclaimed the gospel to him — as God had promised he would ([Acts 9:15](#) and [23:11](#)).

iii. It seems likely that Paul was acquitted of these charges, and by most estimates was free for another four or five years until he was arrested again, imprisoned, condemned, and executed in Rome at the command of Nero in A.D. 66 or 67 — as the historical traditions of the early church state.

iv. Probably, Luke did not record Paul's appearance before Caesar because the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts were written to give the Roman court the background and facts of Paul's case in his trial before Caesar.

e. **No one forbidding him:** This has the idea of *completely unhindered*. Paul's chains and custody mattered nothing. The word of God was unhindered.

i. As Paul came to Rome, the sea, the soldiers, and the snake all threatened his life. But God delivered him from them all. Through Paul, God shows that God's man, fulfilling God's will, *cannot* be stopped — though all kinds of difficulty may come in the way.

ii. Finally, even the disbelief of some of the Jews — or anyone else's rejection of Jesus — will not hinder the gospel. The gospel will go forth and find those who will believe.

iii. [Matthew 22:1-14](#) is a parabolic illustration of the Book of Acts. God prepared a feast for Israel, and invited them to come (in the days of Jesus' ministry), but they would not come. Then, He sent out a second invitation, after *all things were ready*. But they did not come then either; instead, they killed God's servants who brought the message of the feast. Finally, God invited all that would come, including Gentiles — but they could only come if they were clothed in the garments of Jesus.

f. **With all confidence, no one forbidding him:** There is no end to the story, because the history of the church continues this story on and on through the centuries. Trusting in Jesus, relying on the power of the Holy Spirit and the guidance of the Father, the word of God will continue to spread without hindrance and continue to change lives for the glory of God. The Book of Acts really is a never-ending story.

i. "Now unto him, who is able to work so as none can hinder, be all honour and glory, dominion and power, for ever and ever. Amen." (Poole)